

NEWSLETTER

Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund

2nd November 2013 No. 11

AGTF



Abodallah Langony,
immigrant from Mozambique



Adacun Ali Siddhi,
immigrant from India



Adgon Akalle,
immigrant from Ethiopia



Lowgonkin,
immigrant from China



Mahomed Ibrahim,
immigrant from Omani



Mandrandra,
immigrant from Madagascar



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Aapravasi Ghat
inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2006

Visit of His Excellency Pranab Mukherjee, the President of the Republic of India

His Excellency Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India, visited Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site on 12 March 2013. The President was invited by the Government of Mauritius in the context of the celebration of the 45th anniversary of the Independence of Mauritius and the 21st anniversary of the Republic of Mauritius.



The Management Plan 2013-2018

The Management Plan is a document required by the UNESCO World Heritage Convention to ensure the preservation and sustainability of the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Property. The Management Plan 2006 was reviewed to better meet our objectives and also ensure adaptive management and sustainable development at World Heritage Property. The document to be submitted to UNESCO World Heritage Centre states our strategies and actions for the next five years. It can be consulted on our website.



The Consultative Committee held on 16 July 2013

On the occasion of the 7th anniversary of the inscription of the Aapravasi Ghat on the World Heritage List, the AGTF organized a Consultative Committee involving stakeholders, partners, collaborators, the local community and members of the public to present the latest developments at World Heritage Site and our future strategy for conservation, promotion, research and education. The objective was to inform the public and to receive feedback from the people involved with or interested in the World Heritage Property.



The Preparation of a nomination dossier for the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

The AGTF worked in collaboration with the Ministry of Arts & Culture, the University of Mauritius and the National Heritage Fund to prepare a proposal to inscribe Geet Gawai on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Geet Gawai is part of the legacy of indenture that is still vibrant in Mauritius. An international recognition would further sustain its safeguarding.



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Editorial Committee

Mr. T. Garburrin, Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Arts & Culture
 Mrs. S. Ramlallah, Board Member, AGTF
 Mr. B. P. Dinand, Board Member, AGTF

Ms. C. Forest, Head Technical Unit, AGTF
 Mr. S. Peerthum, Historian, AGTF
 Ms. C. Miao Foh, Research Assistant, AGTF

Editorial



2nd November 2013 marks the 179th anniversary of the arrival of indentured labourers in Mauritius. More than four decades ago, it was the Late Beekrumsing Ramlallah who began this important tradition with an annual *yaj* in order to pay a heartfelt tribute to the memories, trials and tribulations of our immigrant ancestors. Around a decade ago, the Government of Mauritius took the bold and laudable initiative of choosing this date to observe this special day in our country's rich and complex history which forever altered the demography, economy, society and politics of our small Indian Ocean island-state.

In 2002, the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund was established and ever since then, it has played a paramount role in promoting the local and international importance of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, other indenture sites and the experience of the indentured labourers in Mauritius. Around a year ago, I assumed the Chairmanship of AGTF and ever since then, several key projects and publications have been achieved such as the three volumes on indentured labour in Mauritius which saw the participation of more than 30 local and international authors, a publication on Immigrant Gokoola and the village and temple that bear his name. Today, AGTF is about to launch for the first time, a book of poems on the Aapravasi Ghat and indentured labour by Dr. Khal Torabully, a well-known Mauritian writer.

In March of this year, we had the pleasure of the historic visit of the Honourable Pranab Kumar Mukherjee, the President of India, at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site. In July 2013, excavations were undertaken by a team of professional archaeologists from the USA and Western Europe, with the support of AGTF, which provide new insights into the living conditions and health of the indentured and ex-indentured labourers during the 19th century in Mauritius. During the same month, a successful consultative committee with important stakeholders in the Aapravasi Ghat Buffer Zone was organized in order to mark the 7th anniversary of the inscription of our site on UNESCO's prestigious World Heritage List.

Earlier this year, a detailed inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mauritius linked with indentured labour was completed. Furthermore, in September of this year, a national half-day workshop was organized for Mauritian writers which will lead to the publication of several short studies on the sugar estates, villages and localities of our country linked with indentured labour.

During the course of this year, I visited Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad, Guadeloupe and Martinique, where I launched the idea of setting up an International Indentured Labour Route Project. In June 2013, I gave an important speech at an international conference on indenture and slavery where I strongly advocated for the Indian Diaspora countries to take part in the establishment of such an international project. Now more than ever, in line with the recommendations of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee and the commitment which was taken at the international conference on indentured labour in December 2011 in Mauritius, the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund together with the Ministry of Arts and Culture are finally taking the necessary steps in order to make the International Indenture Labour Route a reality.

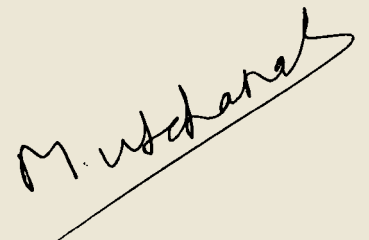
When looking forward to 2014, it is with great pleasure that I announce that in the context of the 180th anniversary of the arrival of the indentured labourers in Mauritius, an itinerary exhibit, concerning the forthcoming Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre (BRIC), will be put on display in Mauritius, Reunion Island and South Africa. In January 2014, it is presumed that it will be one of the important exhibits at the next Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas in India.

In early 2014, Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre (BRIC) will become operational while the landscaping of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site and the conservation of the Old Labourers' Quarters at Trianon will be completed. During the coming months, our Mauritian citizens, tourists and other foreigners will be have the opportunity to discover and even "rediscover" the long, rich and complex history of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, other indenture sites and the experience of the indentured labourers in Mauritius. This forms an integral part of the commitment of AGTF to promoting our unique historical site.

In the near future, AGTF plans to have an operational replica of the ship Atlas, which brought the 36 indentured workers to Mauritius, docked near the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site. Its main objective will be to take Mauritian and foreign visitors for a tour of Port Louis harbor and around Mauritius and relive and understand the experience of the arriving indentured labourers. The Indian High Commission in Mauritius has agreed in principle to provide help and support for the implementation of this important project.

Next year, as part of the 180th anniversary commemorations, a major international conference will be held which will include the launching of several publications by Mauritian authors and a voluminous AGTF souvenir magazine. The completion of these AGTF projects and the launching of these publications are tangible examples of the AGTF's commitment to fulfilling the objectives of its Act and the vision of our Prime Minister in preserving and promoting our Mauritian cultural heritage.

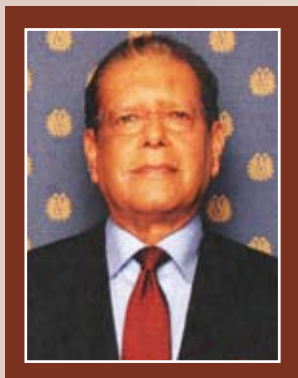
As I conclude my editorial, I have a very special thought for my ancestors Immigrant Utchanah his parents, Immigrants Gengiah and Juggamah, and his three sisters, Chinamee, Juggamah and Pydamah, who left their place of birth at Vizagapatnam in the Telugu-speaking districts of southern India. In September 1865, they arrived and were registered at the Immigration Depot or the present-day Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site. Just like hundreds of thousands of other immigrant men, women and children, through their hardwork and sacrifices, they transformed this small rocky and barren island into a garden of sugar. They contributed to the making of modern Mauritius through their toils and tears and today we are their proud descendants and inheritors.



Mahen Utchanah
Chairman, Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund
2nd November 2013



Republic of Mauritius



*I*t is my pleasure to be associated with the publication of the annual Newsletter 2013 of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund.

I would like to congratulate the Chairperson and Members of the Fund for their excellent initiative in commemorating the 179th Anniversary of the arrival of the first Indian Immigrants in Mauritius in the latter half of the 19th Century.

As we all know, through their sweat and toil, the Indian Immigrants who were brought into Mauritius to work in the sugar cane fields, have laid the foundations for a modern and prosperous Mauritius.

The history of Mauritius is replete with the hardships and tribulations that our forefathers had to undergo in the hands of their colonial masters. They had to work from dawn to sunset, very often to the detriment of their health in order to shape the destiny of our country. Many of them even lost their lives in the sugar cane fields because of the treatment that was meted out to them.

The commemoration of their arrival in Mauritius is therefore a legitimate way of immortalizing the contribution they have in the socio-economic development of Mauritius.

I take this opportunity to wish the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund success in its endeavor.

H.E. Mr Rajkeswur Purryag, GCSK, GOSK
President of the Republic
28 August 2013



Prime Minister
Republic of Mauritius



*T*he Chairperson and members of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund deserve our congratulations for their dedication and continued furtherance of illuminating our past history of indentured labourers.

I am glad that we managed to have the Aapravasi Ghat inscribed on the World Heritage List of UNESCO in 2006, for it throws light on an important part of our history and the unsung heroes who laid the foundation of modern Mauritius. No country can aspire to move forward if it ignores its history, however painful.

It is my fervent hope that the younger generation shows a keener interest in our history. Many of our citizens do not seem to realize the harsh reality of our past, and how it was only by dint of hard work, sheer perseverance and solidarity that we managed to overcome adversity and turn our country into a peaceful and tolerant society, which has given an enduring meaning to the words first uttered by the Father of our Nation about Mauritians being an example of "Unity in Diversity".

Dr the Hon Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP
Prime Minister
04 September 2013



Republic of Mauritius



I am once again pleased to associate myself with the commemoration marking the 179th anniversary of the landing of the first indentured labourers at the Aapravasi Ghat.

As the landing place of a majority of our ancestors, this World Heritage Site reminds us that we are a country of immigrants; a country that has overcome the vicissitudes of history in the preceding centuries to develop into a prosperous nation. While it is important to pay homage to those enterprising pioneers who did not waver in the face of adversity, it is our duty to preserve their ethos. It is largely thanks to these legacies of *savoir-vivre* and tolerance that today we are citizens of a peaceful, multi-ethnic and democratic society that stands out as an example in the League of Nations.

Government will continue to preserve and promote this World Heritage site for the benefit of humanity. The site will witness significant developments with the completion of Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre project next year. This will enhance visitor experience while making the Aapravasi Ghat a major attraction in the city.

I congratulate the Chairman and members of the Board as well as the employees of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund for their good work. I take this opportunity to assure them my continued support.

M. Choonee
Minister



Lord Mayor's Office



*T*he Aapravasi Ghat, also known as the Immigration Depot or the Coolie Ghat, has always been a landmark in the history of Mauritius. Its recognition as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 2006 is an added value.

Recognition at international level is yet another means to pay tribute to the ancestors of a majority of Mauritians. Those first immigrants have left their imprints at this historical site of Port Louis, also a place of great cultural and emotional significance.

It is worth noting that the City Council had been among those institutions who spared no efforts to have the Aapravasi Ghat listed as World Heritage. Preserving heritage is preserving a country's, a nation's identity. However, ways and means should be looked into so that this heritage can fully integrate a plan whereby this prime location of the city could be developed to its full potential.

As it is every year, the 179th anniversary of the arrival of indentured labourers at the Aapravasi Ghat would be yet another occasion to remember those ancestors who, through their hard work, sacrifices and tears, left us a priceless legacy. We honour their contribution to the social and economic progress of Mauritius.

Aslam Adam Hossenally
Lord Mayor
18 Octobre 2013

Histoize nou ancien dan langage mauzicien

Azordi - Apravasi Ghat éna ène valeur symbolique, ène valeur historique, ène valeur authentique et unique – avec ène rayonnement planétaire dans le domaine culturel, patrimoine et héritage.

Azordi Apravasi Ghat li appartenir à l'humanité- li appartenir à la dignité bann travailleurs engagés- li appartenir à l'histoire mondial- avec ène indentité globale dan la faconnement économique de la planète

En 1835 - zis apres l'abolition l'esclavages – ti éna ène vide – l'esclaves ti vinn libre- main d'oeuvres ti manqué – ti bisin remplacé

Colons la décide pou faire ène l'expérience.. Ène Grand l'Expérience... Maurice vine ène laboratoire... zotte sorti à la recherche bann cobayes pou amène dan caro cannes

Zotte lisié braqué lor l'inde.. zotte réussi convaincre nou bann grand dimounes... sans grand la peine... vers ène destin incertain... juste pour rassure zotte prope du bien

La mort système esclavages donne naissance système travailleurs engagés ...et ti apelle zotte bann coolies—

Ène souffrance allé—Ène lotte misère rentrée .. Ène exploit fini ..ène lotte exploitation vini

En 1834 .. le Port Culcatta témoin--- Bateau Atlas pas ti éna assez place.. fin fonce plusieurs dan ène sel place...vers ène Voyage de sans grace L'océan témoin....- séki fin mort fin zette dan la mer... séki fin malade fin jette dan l'île plate.. séki fin sappé fin zette dan camp sucrier L'Histoire témoin...- Voyage la ti traumatisant mais



l'espoir la ti grand... Voyage la ti horifiant mais détermination la ti grand...conviction la ti grand

Mama ek Papa, Madam ek zenfants ti quitte dan Bihar –Garçon la dan l'esprit pou amène bonheur- ti accepté so Malheur. Li ti croire li pou gagne in pe bonheur, mais resultat ti a l' envers. So l'espoir tourne en deboire.

Separation ti en action, li pas ti attane- li pas alle crée ène lotte nation.

En 1849 – ca 16 perrons Apravasi ghat la ti béni par nou bann ancêtres.--par bann pionier de la paix.--par bann soldats de la construction de l'île Maurice libre et moderne

Ca bann perrons la fin témoin bann qui ti monte ca pou construire l'île Maurice

Ca bann perrons la fin témoin bann qui fin sacrifié zotte même pou l'avenir ca pays la

Ca bann perrons la, li symbolise zotte sacrifice, zotte devotion et zotte l'émotion

Coumment bétail ti pe compte zotte..ti baigne zotte.. ti enregistré zotte et ti faire zotte mette pouce lor contract travaille

Ène traitement medical cosmetisé ... ène dortoire mal éclairé .. avant quitte zotte dan différent camp sucriers

Ti faire coire pé alle vers ène jardin mais fin découvert dan bois...

Ti faire coire éna l'or en bas roches mais fin découvert scorpion..

Ti faire coire qui pou éna nek printemps mais finn découvert cyclone chaque l'année

Malgré cyclone ..dan grand la brise zotte finn allume la lampe de courage-
zotte in allume la lampe de perseverance..ek resistance –

et zotte pas finn laisse la flame la teigne
Dans zotte disang ti éna tolérance
Dans zotte tradition ti éna persistance
So religion c'était la convition pou la deliverence
Vivre et laisse vivre ti toujours présent dan so l'existence

Colons la exploité, Coolie la accepté—
Colons la fouetté, Coolies la encaissé—
Colons la fatigué battu-- mais Coolies la pas fatigué gagne battu

La prière ti zotte sel source de l'inspiration et consolation
Geeta et Coran...Ramayan et Tirukural..ti la baze zotte consience
Baitka et Maktab...Satsang et Kalimaye...ti fondation zotte evolution
Zotte ti réalisé qui l'éducation ti la cle l'avenir zotte zenfants
Zotte ti réalisé qui cadnat la - capave ouvert zisse a travers l'éducation
Et zotte finn transpire beaucoup --pou faire zotte zenfants gagne l'éducation

Satini Pomme de terre, Du riz ration avec Bouillon brede mouroum
Cotomili so chutni, avec litti trempe dan dalle lentil noir
Patate, Manioc et fruit a pain bouille—avec di the pir
Arouille, Suran ek zack dan masala avec beaucoup la sauce

1 boute poisson Soonouk, 1 oignon cru ek piment confi,
Satini pistache avec dilo cange fricasé
Satini Coco, farata avec brède martin touffé

Ca meme ti aliments nou ancien
Obliger mange la moitié ventre ti zotte destin

Malgré la misère alimentaire zotte ti économisé pou faire zotte zenfants éduqué.
Malgre zotte difficile, malgre ki zotte finn gagne maltraite,
Zotte finn cultivé..zotte finn lutté..
Zotte finn perseveré et zotte finn réussi trouve liberté pou l'île Maurice
Azordi, nou, zotte descendants- nou finn herite -- liberté – prosperité—et dignité

Et cest grace ek sacrifice nou ancien

NOU FIERE DE CA et nou bisin continié reste fiere de ca
Descendants travailleurs engagés -- la main dan la main avec descendants esclaves-- finn oriente destin sa pays la
Et zordi nou destin dan nou la main...

Vive Aapravasi Ghat
Vive Nou Histoire
Vive L'île Maurice

Raju Mohit
Officer in Charge, AGTF
2 Novembre 2013

The Achievements of AGTF from July 2006 to October 2013

1. Inscription of the Aapravasi Ghat on UNESCO's World Heritage List in July 2006.
2. The Amendment to the AGTF Act in 2006 and 2011 to make provision for its new World Heritage Site status.
3. The completion of the Aapravasi Ghat Conservation Project (2004-2011).
4. The preparation of the Management Plan 2006 - 2012 submitted to UNESCO in 2006.
5. The preparation of the Visitor Management Plan 2008.
6. The preparation and issue of the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) for the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site Buffer Zone (2007-2011).
7. The documentation of more than 250 buildings in the buffer zone (Photogrammetry Project, 2008).
8. Setting up of a documentation system and criteria to assess the heritage value of buildings in the buffer zone (2007-2008).
9. Preparation of a Risk Preparedness Plan in 2011.
10. The review of the Management Plan in 2012 and production of a new Management Plan 2013-2018.
11. The finalisation of a Conservation Manual for heritage in the buffer zone (2014).
12. AGTF has set up a small documentation centre on indenture in 2007 and an extensive documentation of primary sources on indentured labour at the Mauritius Archives and MGI was undertaken in 2008.
13. Collaboration between AGTF with the TJC, NHF, Nelson Mandela Centre MGI, UOM, MIE, MRC and also with foreign organizations over the years.
14. Launching of the Vagrants Database Project in 2008.
15. The completion of Phase 1 of the Vagrant Depot Conservation Project in 2011.
16. The Trianon Old Labourers' Quarters Conservation Project (2011-2014).
17. Multi-disciplinary study of indenture sites such as Aapravasi Ghat, Trianon, Flat Island, Vagrant Depot, Bois Marchand and Forbach between 2007 until present day.
18. The International Conference on Indentured Labour in December 2011.
19. AGTF contributed in the preparation of the proposal to inscribe the Indentured Immigration Archives of the Republic of Mauritius on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register in 2011.
20. Several publications were produced by the AGTF since 2003.
21. Launching of the book on Gokoola family in December 2012.
22. The publication and launching of the 3 Volumes on Indentured Labour in April 2013.
23. AGTF prepared an inventory of 60 elements of intangible cultural heritage linked to indenture in 2010.
24. Participation in the preparation of a nomination dossier on the Bhojpuri traditional songs for the representative list of UNESCO in 2013.
25. Setting up of a public programme for the audience in 2005.
26. Publication of a school kit for teachers in 2009.
27. Setting up and implementation of an outreach programme in schools and associations with more than 4000 participants in 2013.
28. More than 10 exhibitions on indenture and the significance of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site since 2002.
29. Between 2006 and 2013, AGTF has held regular events for the promotion of heritage such as the International Day for Monuments and Sites on 18 April each year.
30. In March 2012, the UNESCO Monitoring Mission lead by Dr. Mohammed Juma reported positively on the achievements of the AGTF for the management of the World Heritage Site and for research undertaken so far.
31. Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre (BRIC) and the landscaping of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site are under way and works will be completed in 2014.
32. The publication of Khal Toorabully's Voices from the Aapravasi Ghat and AGTF's 52-page annual newsletter in October 2013.

“They Came to Mauritian Shores”: The Experiences of Free or Non-Indentured Indian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Mauritius

*Dr. Satteeanund Peerthum, Historian and
Satyendra Peerthum, Historian*

Over the past eighty years, several books and articles have been written on the indentured labourers and the indentured labour system in Mauritius. However, one of the important themes of research which have been largely neglected by Mauritian historians and scholars are the free Indian immigrants who reached Mauritian shores during the nineteenth century. Therefore, the life-stories of the non-indentured Indian immigrants are one of the research themes which is currently being documented by the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund as part of its research objectives for 2013 and 2014.

Who were the Free or Non-Indentured Indian Immigrant ?



Ghilaza (No.361/48) arrived as a Free Passenger from India in 1848 as a child. He was a job contractor and independent vegetable cultivator and was arrested as a vagrant in 1881 when he was 43 years old. He was released shortly after producing his papers. Source: MGI Indian Immigration Archives, Moka.

It is commonly known in Mauritius that between 1826 and 1910, more than 462,000 indentured workers arrived in Port Louis. However, few Mauritians are aware that, during the same period, an estimated 25,000 to 30,000 free Indian immigrants came to work and live in our country. A careful analysis of the records of the National Archives Department, Mahatma Gandhi Institute Indian Immigration Archives and the Civil Status Office indicates that between the 1820s and 1830s, several dozen free immigrants landed in Port Louis each year. Furthermore, between the 1840s and 1920s, hundreds arrived annually.

Who exactly were the free or non-indentured immigrants from the Indian sub-continent? During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the free immigrants paid their own passages when they got on board their ships in Indian ports such as Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Pondicherry, Cochin, Tanquebar, Cuddalore, Karikal and Surat. Their passages usually cost two to three pounds sterling and they had to bring their own rations which was an additional cost of more than one pound.

Once they arrived in Port Louis, they did not pass through the Immigration Depot (known today at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site) because they were registered at the Customs Department and the Police Headquarters in Port Louis. They were provided with an identification number which consisted of the free immigrant's passenger list number and the year of their arrival, the two numbers were usually divided with a slash. It became an integral part of their identity in Mauritius during the remainder of their lives just like our Mauritian national identification card.

As part of the formalities, each non-indentured immigrant had to deposit ten pounds sterling in the form of a financial security, through the Police Department, into the local government savings bank which allowed them to obtain a residence permit for twelve months. However,



Bizloll (No.747/47) arrived as a Free Passenger from India in 1847. He was a sirdar, small property owner and was arrested as a vagrant in 1881 when he was 56 years old. He was released shortly after producing his papers. Source: MGI Indian Immigration Archives, PH Series: Vagrant Photos and Registers

this financial security was returned to them once the free immigrant left a copy of proof of employment and residence which had to be valid for a period of one year and renewed each year. The British Governor was the only one who could give such an authorization, through the Office of the Colonial Secretary where the non-indentured immigrants sent their residence requests. Ever since the 1820s, there was an Assistant Colonial Secretary who was responsible for issues dealing with residents, aliens and free immigrants in the colony. It is important to note that between the 1820s and early 1900s, there were tens of thousands of non-indentured Indian immigrants who had to follow the rules and regulations of a government ordinance of 1817 regulating the aliens and foreigners in the colony.

During the nineteenth century, the free immigrants had to spend on average between twelve to thirteen pounds sterling for their passage, rations on board their ships and the right of residence in Mauritius. Therefore, they had to have access to some financial resources and many among them were skilled and semi-skilled workers or had many years of work experience in India. The amount of money they spent to come to Mauritius represented the wages of several months for them. Thus, it was a well-planned decision before they left the Indian sub-continent in search of new opportunities and to improve their lives in Mauritius.

Between the 1820s and early 1900s, the overwhelming majority, or more than three fourths, of the non-indentured Indians who arrived in our country were single adult males between the ages of eighteen and forty. A careful analysis of the list of engagements, vagrant registers, civil status records and bi-annual reports on the sugar estates for the period between the 1860s and early 1900s is quite revealing. They show that during this period, the non-indentured Indian immigrants consisted only 1% to 5% of the local estate work force.

Most of the free Indian immigrants went to work in Port Louis, its suburbs, in the towns and villages of the colony. In addition, it was only a minority among them who went to work as day labourers and as "engaged labourers" on one-year contracts on the sugar estates. Free Indian immigrants or Free Indian passengers, such as Bizloll, Peerthum, Ghilaza, and Parawatta made an important contribution in the making of the Mauritius economy during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Their lives and achievements form an integral part of the history of indentured labour and Indian immigration in colonial Mauritius.

Name and Surname, Age and Place of Birth.	Sex.
Peerthum 5750 (bis), fifty nine years India (Calcutta).	male

Peerthum (5750 bis). A Free Indian Immigrant arrived in Mauritius during the early 1860s. He worked as a day labourer in Savanne and Flacq. He passed away in 1905 at the age of 59.

Source: Extract from the Civil Status Office, Port Louis

Quarantine Controversies and Colonial Administration

(Adapted from *Health Disease and Indian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Mauritius*, published by AGTF, 2010)

Raj Boodhoo, Researcher in Medical History



Flat island, 1857. Source: MNA.

Quarantine meaning a period of forty days (*une quarantaine de jours*) is enforced isolation. This system existed in this island since the eighteenth century, but a rigorous form of isolation was introduced by the British when large scale Indian immigration started in 1834. This period coincided with serious outbreaks of disease such as smallpox in 1830s and cholera in the 1850s and 1860s. Although England also suffered from cholera pandemics, the government removed all forms of quarantine restrictions by the mid-nineteenth century, however in its colonies, including Mauritius; rigorous quarantine regulations continued and became even more oppressive as the century unfolded.

In Mauritius, Indian immigration was at the base of the development of the sugar industry, but at the same, it was the cause of considerable concern with the arrival of large number of Indians with smallpox or cholera. At

first, the Colonial Office encouraged the setting up of an isolation station with adequate facilities to accommodate unhealthy Indians because very often they were forced to stay isolated on the ships in the harbour for a long period of time before they were allowed to land. The old quarantine station at the Ile aux Tonneliers was small and did not provide enough shelter. The press, members of the government and also local medical circles were against the plan of the government to set up a permanent station at this place, many believed that winds could carry miasma from that place to the town. They pressed the authorities to consider islets at a distance from the main land, such as Flat and Gabriel Islands. Some inhabitants even petitioned to set up a station at Rodrigues, which was refused by the government. The government accepted with reluctance to set up a station at Flat Island. From the mid-1850s, it became the main station. British medical officers very often showed their disapproval to direct immigrants to those stations, very often sites of considerable misery. But the pressure was always strong, even the Municipality of Port Louis was against immigrant ships anchoring in the harbour. At each rumour of disease, the streets of the town flared up with protests.

Succeeding governors did not change the practice, although it was costly and dangerous. They preferred not to antagonise local opinion. Governor Napier Broome's statement summarizes the prevailing situation, that there were three delicate issues in the colony, 'land, labour and quarantine.'

In spite of important progress of medicine, vaccination campaigns, and important discoveries concerning the cause of disease such as smallpox and cholera, the quarantine system was maintained in Mauritius well into the twentieth century.

Another Perspective on The Mauritian Experience With Indentured Labour

They Came to Mauritian Shores: Mozambican, Malagasy and Comorian Indentured Workers in 19th Century Mauritius

Satyendra Peerthum, Historian

The African and Malagasy Indentured Workers

One of the largely neglected research themes in modern Mauritian historiography is the experience of the non-Indian workers during the 19th century, specifically the Malagasy, Mozambican and Comorian indentured workers.



Oswald Nanjeepea, a Mozambican Labourer and a Catholic who arrived in Mauritius in 1860. He was photographed at the Immigration Depot when he was 50 years old in 1888. Source: MGIIIA/PG Series.

From 1839 to the 1857, there were thousands of Malagasy, Mozambican and Comorian contractual labourers who came to Mauritian shores to work in Port Louis and on the island's sugar estates. During that period, I compiled statistics that showed that about 4,133 non-Indian indentured workers arrived in Mauritius; of which around 3,607 were Malagasy, 320 were Mozambicans and 206 were Comorians. The Malagasy indentured labourers came mainly from eastern, central and north-western Madagascar and included important local tribal nations and groups such as the Antanosy, Antamboly, Merina, Tamboly, Sakalava, and the Betsimisarakas. The Mozambicans who came, belonged to powerful tribal nations such as the Makua, Yao, Maravi, Lomwe and Nginodo. The Comorian workers were Schirazi, an ethnic mix between Arabs and East Africans, and they came mostly from Anjouan and some from Grande Comore, Mayotte and Moheli.

These men were skilled and semi-skilled workers and were engaged. They were engaged on indenture contracts for 1 and 2 years, unlike the 5-year indenture engagements of the Indian workers. However, most of the time, they were given the same contractual terms and conditions as their Indian counterparts. Many of them did not complete their indenture contracts; mostly because there was a high death rate among them and because they were regularly arrested as vagrants and deserters by the local colonial police and in such case, repatriated to their home countries.

The case-study of Tsimalay, Ravaton and Kadhey are one of the many examples of the experience of Malagasy, Mozambicans and Comorians indentured workers in Mauritius.

The Experiences of Tsimalay, Ravaton and Kadehy

In October 1850, Tsimalay arrived in Mauritius as a contractual worker from Taomasina (Tamatave) in the north east Madagascar. On 28th October of the same year, Thomy Hugon, the Protector of Immigrants, provided him with an immigrant ticket just like tens of thousands of other Indian indentured workers. Tsimalay was employed on a 3-year contract as a blacksmith for Mr. Loustau, part-owner of Chamouny Sugar Estate in Savanne District. He was born in a village near Tamatave in 1830, he was a Christian and his father was Tsimaka, a dock worker.



A Ship Register showing the arrival of Mosa, Hamesy Kombo and other Indentured Johannese or Comorian Indentured Labourers in Mauritius in 1841.

Source: MGIIIA/PE Series.

On 31st October 1853, he completed his three-year contract and obtained a certificate of discharge from the Stipendiary Magistrate of Savanne with the support of his employer. Lousteau described his former worker as being "intelligent and hard working" and regretted his departure. By December 1853, Tsimalay got on board a ship bound for Tamatave at the age of 23.

Compared to Tsimalay who chose to return to his home country, the immigrants Ravaton and Kadehy are good examples of Malagasy indentured workers who adopted Mauritius as their new home. They were both from the island of Nossi-Be, located a few kilometres off the North East coast of Madagascar. They arrived at the Immigration Depot in Mauritius in July 1850. Immigrant Ravaton, son of Takon, was 35 years old when he was registered and worked as a labourer on Grande Rosalie Sugar Estate in Pamplemousses District. After finishing his two-year contract, he went to work as a messenger in Port Louis. He passed away there in March 1859 at the age of 43.

His fellow traveler and friend, Kadehy, son of Marsakay, arrived in Mauritius when he was 22 years old. He was sent to work on a two-year contract as a labourer at Bagatelle Sugar Estate in Moka District. By 1865, he became a labour overseer on that particular sugar estate and was able to purchase a small plot of land near the village of Moka. In September 1877, Kadehy died at the age of 49 and his property was inherited by his wife, a creole lady, and his two sons.

Between the arrival of the first indentured worker (1826) and the end of indenture system (1910), an estimated total of more than 467,400 indentured workers came to Mauritian shores. Out of which, from 1829 to 1870, a total of 9,484 Malagasy, Mozambican, other African workers, Chinese, Liberated Africans, Arab workers from Aden, Sinhalese and other "Non-Indian" labourers

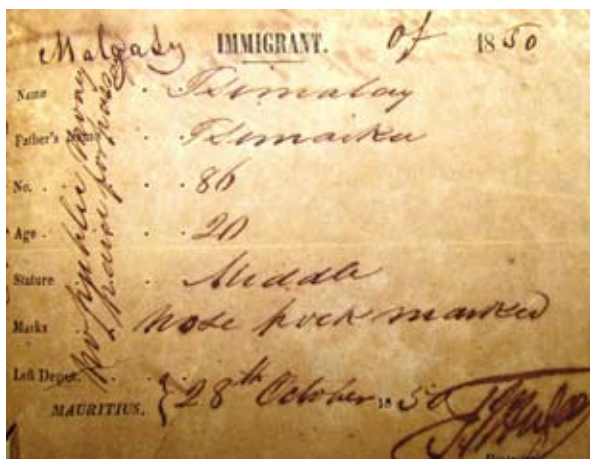
"Foreign Immigrants" (a) registered at the Immigration Office up to the close of 1859.

YEARS.	From Madagascar.		From Coast of Africa.		From Aden.		From the Laccadives.		Chinese.		Johannese.		TOTAL.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	Males.	Females.
1837 ..									10				10	
—39 ..	28												28	
—40 ..	325								14				339	
—41 ..	2,056								767		206		3,029	
—42 ..	730								634				1,364	
—43 ..	97								1,092				1,189	
—45 ..	20												20	
—49 ..	87	3											87	3
—51 ..	74	9											74	9
—52 ..	26	5											26	5
—53 ..									222				222	
—55 ..	18												18	75
—56 ..	96	33	309	11	402	31							807	
—57 ..							4						4	
	3,557	50	309	11	402	31	4		2,739		206		7,217	92

The Immigrant Ticket of Tsimalay, a Malagasy Indentured Labourer who arrived in October 1850 in Mauritius. Source: MGIIIA/PE Series.

landed in Port Louis. Therefore, they represent an estimated total of more than 2% of all the contractual workers who reached our country.

As we commemorate the arrival of the indentured workers on 2nd November 2013, we should have a special thought for Immigrants Tsimalay, Ravaton, Kadehy, Oswald Nanjeea and the thousands of other Mozambican, Malagasy and Comorian indentured workers who worked for the development of our country. After all, most of them voluntarily crossed the *Mare Indicum* as they came to Mauritian shores in search of a better life. At the same time, during the early post-emancipation era, they were brought to our country in order to supplement and then to replace the slaves and apprentices as the island's main work force.



The Immigrant Ticket of Tsimalay, a Malagasy Indentured Labourer who arrived in October 1850 in Mauritius. Source: MGIIIA/PE Series.

Decolonizing the Historiography of Indentured Labour in Suriname

A Review of Radjinder Bhagwanbali

Dr Sandew Hira,
International Institute for Scientific Research, The Hague

The case of Suriname

Dr. Radjinder Bhagwanbali is the most productive historian regarding indentured labour in Suriname. He has produced three books on this topic, starting with his dissertation "Contracts for Suriname – Labour Migration from British India under the Indentured Labour System 1873-1916." This study dealt with the system of recruitment in India.

His second book titled *The New Avatar of Slavery – Indian Immigrants under the Indentured Labour System in Suriname 1873-1916* goes in depth into the functioning of indentured labour on the plantations in Suriname.

His third publication *Tetary the obstinate – The Resistance of Indian against the Indentured Labour System in Suriname 1873-1916* is a study of resistance against the system.

Bhagwanbali is a classic historian. He avoids speculation. He immerses himself in the archives. He painstakingly gathers the details that show how the system worked.

The picture is astonishing. Here are some of his conclusions:

1. Migration was not an individual action. It was an organized system where the colonialist had the lead and control. The former enslaver-planter placed an order to recruit labourers. It was not the other way round, that the labourers were offering themselves for work on the plantations.
2. The system of recruitment was based on deception. The workers agreed to a contract without any idea of what they were going to experience in a system of oppression and exploitation. The reality of indentured labour was hidden in the recruitment.
3. In the labour camps (we don't use the word 'plantation' because it does not reflect the actual conditions) the reality was horrendous. The workers lived in the same houses as the former enslaved Africans. They performed the same tasks. They endured the same system of racist treatment. Bhagwanbali provides details of the use of the whip. He cites names and

the number of lashes individual Indians received, women included. The medical situation was really bad. The number of people who died in the period of indenture ship was extremely high: 16% (5.500 out of 34.000).

4. In the period 1873-1916, there were 40 uprisings in the labour camps quelled by police and military: 31 workers were executed in two of these uprisings: 24 in labour camp Mariënborg and 7 in labour camp Zorg en Hoop. Among those executed was a young woman, Tetary, the only female who actually led an uprising of indentured labourers.

Tetary, gender and revolt

Until the publication of the third book of Bhagwanbali nobody in the Suriname community knew the name of Tetary. Recently a two-series documentary has been produced by Sandew Hira on Tetary and the uprising in labour camp Zorg en Hoop. The documentary dramatized the background and the events of the uprising. It was broadcasted by the Hindu Broadcasting Corporation in Holland and shown in Suriname in June 2013.

The documentary devoted a fair portion of the time to the position of women during indenture ship. A young historian working in the National Archives of Suriname, Tanya Sitaram, was the lead narrator in the documentary. She provided the analysis of gender, indentureship and revolt. The lead actress, Kajol Tahdil (see photo), was shown in a discussion between young women reflecting on their lives and in heated debates with men. Sitaram is currently working on a master thesis on women and indentureship.

There are two schools in the study of indenture ship in Suriname. The differences between these schools are on three levels.

The first is the level of conceptualization of colonialism. The old school – which I named scientific colonialism – accepts the legitimacy of colonialism. Colonialism as a system is not questioned. The new school – which I

term decolonizing the mind – questions the right of one people to conquer and rule other people. The different conceptualization is reflected in different concepts that are used such as the concept of plantation versus labour camp.

The second is the level of research. The old school focuses on descriptive narratives with implicit assumptions regarding the legitimate morality of colonialism. The new school provides analysis of historical facts and focuses on the humanity of the indentured labour and the inhumanity of colonialism.

The third is the level of policy implication. The study of Bhagwanbali produced detailed personal information about the Indians that were executed in the labour camps. One policy implication is that we pose the question: does the family of these people in India know what really happened to their kin in Suriname? The colonialist did not bother to report to the family what happened. Our legacy is to do our utmost to trace their relatives in India and recount to them what heroic actions they were involved in. Naturally this means that we set in motion a process of fundamentally questioning the system of colonialism.

This is the experience of Suriname. I wonder if something similar is happening in other countries.

The Tamil Indian Immigrants



The Tamil Hindus were brought to Mauritius in 1728 from the southern state of Tamil Nadu. They were the first immigrants from the South Eastern India who were non Hindi speaking and who arrived before the mass immigration of indentured labourers. They

came as craftsmen to Mauritius from the French port of Pondicherry for the construction of the French colonial buildings and port in the city of Port Louis. These Tamil craftsmen were small in number until the beginning of 1830s more of them were brought during the immigration of indentured labourers. The Tamil Hindus share not only a geographic ancestry but also a linguistic and cultural heritage that is intimately linked to their distinct religious practices. Tamil labour immigrants mostly came from the south Indian port city of Madras known as Chennai in modern India. They were sent to work on sugar estates all over the island of Mauritius and they grouped together to preserve their traditions. The Tamils practiced their daily religious rituals as well as their unique and popular religious festival Kavadee –Fire Walking. With such a visible and religious practice on the sugar estates, they were able to secure a plot of land for shrines and later temples known as Kovils. The Tamil community with the help of the Tamil craftsmen built the first Hindu temple in 1850. The early establishment of Tamil Kovils was

Bhuruth Dinand, AGTF Board Member



primarily due to the economic independence of a small number of Tamils connected to the merchant class. They built the kovils in the evening hours but due to their lack of formal training in temple architecture many of the kovils were simple in structure. These kovils provided a resting place for the protecting deities and a centre for the local Tamil community. Tamils are devotees of Shiva known as Shaivaite and most Kovils in Mauritius are dedicated to Murugan, son of Shiva or a form of the mother goddess such as Marriamen.

With the growing number of Kovils, Tamil organisations arose to build and administer these religious centers as well as to promote the interests of Tamils in general. The Mauritius Tamil Temple Federation (MTTF) was established in 1960 to oversee the administration of the Mauritian Kovils. The MTTF continues to provide the leadership for the Tamil community. The Tamil community in Mauritius has a rich cultural history.

Commemorating The Making of Our History

Remembering the Pioneer Indentured Labourers of 2nd November 1834

Mr. Dravindranath Ramlool (MSK)
AGTF Board Member

Since 2nd November 2001, the Republic of Mauritius commemorates the Arrival of the Indentured Labourers as part of the Mauritian Heritage and in remembrance of all indentured labourers. This commemoration ceremony has since then taken place at the former Immigration Depot, now known as the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site. The 2nd November has been decreed as a Public Holiday in memorial of the arrival of the 36 Indentured Labourers on board of the Atlas.

The Recruitment of Arbuthnot's Coolies

It was on the 10th of September 1834 that 36 'Hill Coolies' of the 'Dhangar' caste signed a five-year contract with Georges Charles Arbuthnot of the Hunter-Arbuthnot & Company, a British trading company in Mauritius, in the presence of C. Mc. Farlan, at the Calcutta Police Head Office. The Hill Coolies originated mostly from the hills of Bihar in Eastern India who were living in Calcutta then. McFarlan, the Chief Magistrate of Calcutta, read and explained in detail the contract to the Indian labourers with the help of an Indian interpreter.

36 Coolies, 30 men and 6 women, agreed to work in Mauritius by putting their thumb marks on the contract as per terms and conditions proposed. Together with the contract, there was also a separate list consisting of the 36 indentured labourers' names on which each of them wrote an 'X' next to their names. Some of their names were Callachand, Dookhun, Bhomarah, Bhoodhoo, Lungon and Bhudhram. The sirdar namely Soorooop, in charge of the labourers, was assisted by Subaram.

According to the contract which was in Bengali language, the males were going to get a wage of five rupees per month while the opposite sex would earn only four rupees per month. An advance of six months' pay was already given to them before they were embarked. The company

which recruited them paid their passage from Calcutta to Port Louis. As a result, one rupee was deducted from their monthly salary by the same British company in order to pay for their return passage at the end of their contract. In addition to a monthly wage, basic needs such as food, clothing, lodging and health were being provided to the contractual labourers. As far as concerned to the wages of the Sirdar and his assistant, they received ten and eight rupees per month respectively.



The Arrival of Arbuthnot's Coolies

After the contract was signed, MacFarlan sent a letter to the Secretary to the Government of the Bengal Presidency, H. Prinsep, informing him of the agreement. The Chief Magistrate requested the Vice-President and Governing Council of the Bengal Presidency to give their stamp of approval to the contract and to allow the labourers to sail for Mauritius. On 15th September, the Vice-President in Council gave his assent to the contract. Thus, the 36 Hill Coolies embarked on the Atlas and began their historic voyage to British Mauritius. The Atlas which was under the command of Captain Hustwick transported not only the 36 contractual labourers but also George Arbuthnot and other passengers as well as a large cargo of rice.

After a long voyage which lasted for more than six weeks, the Atlas reached Port Louis harbour on Sunday afternoon on the 2nd November 1834. Before they could land, Arbuthnot wrote an official letter on behalf of Hunter-Arbuthnot & Company to Governor Nicolay requesting that "they be allowed to land 36 Hill Coolies from the ship Atlas, whom they intend to employ on their Estate, under guarantee that they shall not become a

charge on the Colony". Once they received the Governor's approval, the labourers were being registered.

Hunter-Arbuthnot & Company provided Governor Nicolay with a financial guarantee which was kept in trust by the local colonial government in the Colonial Treasury and would be returned to that British company after the five-year contract of the labourers had expired. As a result, during the afternoon of 3rd November, permission for the landing of the labourers was given by the British governor. However, it was only on Tuesday morning, 4th November that the 36 Hill Coolies were landed close to the old Customs House, not far from the present-day Aapravasi Ghat.

The Journey to Antoinette Sugar Estate in Rivière du Rempart

Later that same day, Arbuthnot's coolies were taken to Belle Alliance Sugar Estate near present-day Piton, in Rivière du Rempart. In 1834, Belle Alliance was owned by Hunter-Arbuthnot & Company and it stretched over an area of 502 acres and had a workforce of between 190 to 200 slaves. The Indian labourers worked from sunrise to sunset, six days a week and they were also required to perform light duties on Sundays. Thus, they worked side by side with the slaves of Belle Alliance in the sugarcane fields.

The arrival of Arbuthnot's coolies is the particular event that is commemorated each year on 2nd November at

the Aapravasi Ghat. These early indentured labourers and the tens of thousands who followed in their footsteps between 1835 and 1839 were pioneers of a migration which was eventually to transform the character of Mauritian life and industry. Furthermore, during the first period of the indenture system, between November 1834 and May 1839, around 25 468 Indians were introduced into this small Indian Ocean island.

During this period, the local sugar planters began to import Indian labourers to supplement and eventually to replace the apprentice labourers to work in the island's sugar canefields, in their homes, and in Port Louis. Between November 1834 and March 1839, around 25,700 Indian labourers were landed on Mauritian shores. However, immigration from the Indian subcontinent was suspended in May 1839 only to be renewed in January 1842, when it became controlled and sponsored by the British authorities of India and Mauritius and a Protector of Immigrants also was appointed in Mauritius.

Each year on 2nd November, the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund commemorates the arrival of the indentured labourers in accordance with the mission statement of the Fund and the objectives of its Act. It forms an integral part of AGTF's *devoir de memoire* in making the Mauritian nation remember the sacrifices and achievements of the indentured workers and to perpetuate their memory as part of the process of nation building. After all, our history is a continuation of their history and thus, their history is our history.



Indo-Mauritians and Indian Immigrants at Antoinette Estate Camp in the early 1900s.
Source: Macmillan Illustrated, 1916

Tracing My Roots

Babita Bahadoor, Research Assistant

Tracing your roots is not an impossible task as long as you know where to go and find the right documents. You do not need to be a professional researcher to carry out a research on your lineage. This article provides details on the procedures undertaken in order to trace the genealogy of indentured labourers (comprising of Indians, non-Indians and Liberated Africans). Most Indian labourers originated from the Bengal, Bombay and Madras Presidencies. Non-Indian indentured labourers comprised of Abyssinians, Chinese, Comorians, Malagasies, Mozambicans, Omani and Yemenis. As far as concerned to a 'Liberated African', he was an enslaved individual who was given a new identity under the law and apprenticed for a period of 5 years. After the completion of his/her term of apprenticeship, he/she became a free British subject. The non-Indentured labourers were those who were termed as 'passengers' and most of them came on the island during the 19th century for trading purposes.

Built in 1849 in view of receiving a large contingent of contractual labourers, the immigration depot, namely the Aapravasi Ghat is one among the well preserved historical sites in Mauritius. This depot was in operation until late 1938 when the post of Protector of Immigrant was abolished. It was only at the immigration depot that the registration process of indentured labourers took place. After its cessation as an immigration depot, all the records which included Emigration Agency Certificates, Marriage Certificates, Photographs of Immigrants, Ticket registers and personal details of immigrants (Immigrant No., name, age, caste, sex, etc) were transferred to the Indian Immigration Archives at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Moka (IIA MGI).

To start with, you have to ensure that you have in your possession all required documents with you, for instance, Birth, Marriage or/and Death Certificates of your Father, Grand Father and great grandfather. Notarial deeds also are important documents. The next step to follow is to look for the Immigrant Number which is found on one of the aforesaid documents.

What is an Immigrant Number?

An Immigrant Number was assigned to each indentured labourer during the registration process at the Immigration Depot. As from 1842, necessary measures were being undertaken by the Government of India and Mauritius in view of controlling the emigration of Indian labour and thus, upon their arrival at the immigration depot, indentured labourers were registered and were assigned an immigrant number found on their Tickets. The Immigration Number is a unique one without which it would have been impossible to identify an indentured labourer.

In case, you do not have any of the aforesaid documents or the Immigrant No., it advisable to start looking for these documents at the Civil Status Office (Birth, Marriage and/or Death Certificates) or the Registrar General Office (Notarial deeds). After acquiring those precious documents, you have to identify the Immigrant No. An example is to look for the Birth Certificate of your great grandparents (father/mother), in which the Immigrant No. may be found just below the name of his/

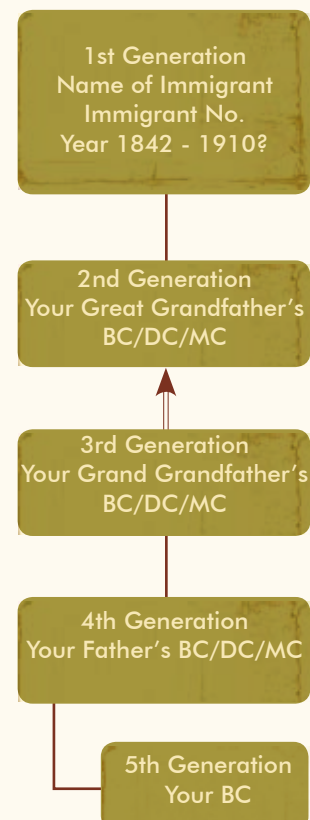


Figure 1: How to find the Immigrant No.

her father's and mother's name. Figure 1 may help you find the Immigrant No.

Once you have been able to trace the Immigrant No., you have to contact the Indian Immigration Archives based at the MGI, Moka. After all these procedures have been carried, you will receive a certificate, on which details of your forebear will be mentioned such as name, age, origin, name of father/mother, name of kin accompanying the indentured labourer, port of embarkation, physical signs/marks, and even a picture of the person can be obtained if available. Photography was introduced at the Immigration Depot in 1865.

After your research in case you found out that your forebear was not an indentured labourer, then you will probably come across a 'Passenger Number'. The difference between the two numbers is that the Passenger Number provides both an identification number along with the year when the latter was registered. Details of the Passenger No. can be obtained in the Z2D Series at the Mauritius National Archives located at Coromandel. The records cover the period 1826 and 1902. However, compared to an Indentured Immigrant, very few information is available regarding a Passengers.

Once you have been able to find information on your ancestors, you may either reconstruct your family tree or with the help of the Certificate obtained at the IIA, MGI, procure a PIO (People of Indian Origin) Card issued by the Indian High Commission in Mauritius on behalf of the Government of India. One important thing you must bear in mind is that most of the archival documents are dated as from the 19th century and some of them are in the process of deterioration while a few of them have already been damaged completely. Therefore, in certain cases, some of the information may not be obtained due to these problems. We wish you a marvelous expedition on the search of your ancestors.



Figure 2: Certificate of Arrival of Parawatta (No.3374/86). She arrived as a Free Passenger from Bombay, India in 1886 as a child. She lived and worked most of her life as a seamstress in Port Louis. Source: Courtesy of the Late Mgr. Amedée Nagapen and The Indo-Mauritian Catholic Association.

Indian Immigrants as Postman

Ghirish Bissoon, Postal Museum

When we talk about the recruitment of Indian immigrants to Mauritius, the first picture that comes to our mind is that of a labourer.

After the abolition of slavery and even after the resumption of coolie trade in 1842, it is true that Indian immigrants were brought to Mauritius to work in fields as labourers. But there were other jobs that they were performing and one of them was the job of postman.

"On 11 October, the Colonial Postmaster informed the Governor that he had obtained the services of fourteen "convict couriers" as per his earlier estimates of February 1847 and requested the services of two additional "couriers" to ensure proper working of his

department" (Huron, J.M and Marion, R., 2012).

The postmen were wearing a jacket, two cloth trousers, brass arm plates on which Post Office were engraved and turbans.

Furthermore, those Indian Convicts marked history as they were the first ones who conveyed letters with the first stamps of Mauritius in 1847(See picture).

In short, Indian immigrants did not only contribute in the development of agriculture but also in the development of communication on the island of Mauritius.



Source: Jean Marie Huron and Robert Marion (2012), *The Story of The Mauritius Post Office The Challenge of delivering a letter 1638-2012*, The Mauritius Post Ltd

Blood, sweat and tears on the stony steps of Aapravasi Ghat

Philip Li Ching Hum

ODI - Organisation for Diasporic Initiatives Mauritius

With the abolition of slavery in 1833 in Britain and with its implementation in 1835 in Mauritius, the British turned to Asia to recruit labourers to work on the sugar cane fields to perpetuate their colonial domination in the heyday of industrial revolution and the nascent days of capitalism. There started to be written in human history one of the massive migrations of Indian labour. This marked the beginning of an odyssey across the *kalapani*, a sad journey of exile across the tempest-tossed ocean.

Especially in early days, lured away by recruiters (mestries) to a place known as *Mirich Desh* which they were made to believe to be Mauritius, a place thought credulously to be north of North India, the coolies blindly accepted to come in their search for greener pasture with the hope to go back to their homeland hereafter. The sea passage lasted for about 30 to 35 days and was an arduous one and there were manifold untold stories of the cruelty, torture and humiliation they had suffered. They had braved the seas and out of this conundrum they have forged fortitude, and a sense of comradeship and brotherhood known as *jehajibhai*. But the indomitable souls of the coolies remained unshakeable. They have carried with them their unwavering Indianness. They kept their culture deeply buried in their souls no matter what hardship they endured.

The stories of the coolies are written with their blood, sweat and tears. They have watered the soil of Mauritius to metamorphose it into paradise. The great majority of these coolies were country folk and they had left behind their villages for the first time. On their sea voyage, they weathered many a storm: home sickness, sea sickness, food, water, living space and outbreak of epidemic. In the early days of indentured labour, the sea captain, committed many irregularities in the records like age, caste and the deceased ones were replaced by others during period of embarkation. Most of them had to use thumb signature. The death toll was about 7% due to diseases and some committed suicide. During the journey, the sanitary conditions were neglected. They were shipped like animals. The most daring rebelled against the prevailing conditions when their womenfolk were ill-treated, when living conditions were beyond human endurance. On the 18th April 1874, coolies aboard the *Allum Ghir* under the leadership of one Balgobin refused to go up the deck as food not meant for human consumption was thrown to them and a



handful called upon their shipmates to remain below decks as a sign of protest. The rebellion was quelled down with utmost savagery and the ringleaders were handcuffed and punished mercilessly. Many voices made themselves heard during the sea journeys in spite of brutal repression during the first waves of indentured labour.

The road to Aapravasi Ghat was strewn with hardships. When the coolies set foot on the stony steps of Aapravasi Ghat, little did they realize the life of misery, deprivation and alienation awaiting them in the *camps sucriers*. Uprooted from their cultural environment, they were coerced to work day and night for a mere pittance in a feudal society and if ever they fell sick their salary was systematically curtailed. At times, they had to work without any salary. They longed for the days to return homeland (*Bharat*) which they had not banished from their souls but it was a dream left unfulfilled. Their only consolation was to see their coming generations climb the social ladder: the sons of *Girmitya*. From thatched settlements to palatial residences. From coolie to Ministers and Prime Minister.

AGTF Projects in 2014

Corinne Forest, Head Technical Unit

The year 2013 has been marked by continuity and progress in our projects. The Conservation Project of the “old labourers’ barracks” at Trianon is in process. As at now, almost all walls were restored and consolidated. The next step is to define the best option to undertake the restoration of the roofs. To this end, sample testing is currently taking place. Concurrently, the “old Labourers’ Barracks” have been fully documented. This detailed documentation led to the identification of what we believe is a place of worship in chamber 9. For this reason, the chamber will be kept intact until a specific restoration plan for the chamber is in place.

In 2014, the technical team wishes to focus on a development plan for Trianon heritage Site where key questions will be addressed. The objective is to develop a project proposal for the establishment of an exhibition area at Trianon. The ultimate goal is to define how Trianon Heritage Site could be a place of attraction for tourists but also for residents in the area while preserving the site. The AGTF believes that using heritage helps its preservation. However, heritage should be used within a defined framework that retains the authenticity and integrity of the place.

A second area of concern is heritage in the buffer zone. The objective in 2014 will be to consolidate our database on Geographical Information System to better manage and valorise heritage in Port Louis. The GIS is a key tool to manage heritage in urban areas in particular when requests need to be addressed promptly with precise information at hand.

To document this database further, but not only, the research programme will continue. We will particularly focus on the early years of indenture. This specifically to document further the key position of Mauritius in the history of indenture and the role this colony played after the British chose Mauritius to evaluate the system of indenture.

The key role of Mauritius is also a focus for the outreach programme that is implemented at World Heritage Site and in schools. This programme is particularly important when the general perception may see heritage as something immovable and static. Our goal is to organise activities and in particular educational activities that involve children. The children are taking part in specifically designed activities such as ceramic making or lime making so that they can apprehend the process used in the past. Once involved, children get a different approach of the past and can finally figure out what were the traditions and what they were used for and why? This is how we propose to approach the study of our past and revive it through new modes of communication so that this knowledge is passed on from generation to generation.

In 2014, our main project - Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre (BRIC) Project - will come to an end. From our point of view, it will be the opportunity to share the results of years of research on indenture and achievements at the AGTF but most important, it will be the first place dedicated to the history and experience of indenture in Mauritius and one of the rare ones in the world.

Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre (BRIC) Project

Corinne Forest, Head Technical Unit

The year 2014 marks the opening of the Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre. This project has long been mentioned as a necessity to promote Mauritian heritage and the meaning of the Aapravasi Ghat for Mauritius and also for other countries where the Diaspora of indentured labourers settled.

The idea of a museum was first mentioned in 1970s when the question of the future of the former Coolie Ghat or Aapravasi Ghat was debated and in particular, when the conservation of the archives kept at the Aapravasi Ghat were discussed before finally being transferred to the Mahatma Gandhi Institute in



Construction of the boat section in BRIC

1976. Later, the “Museum Project” was discussed again when the Promenade project was devised and implemented in 1996. Although it seems that plans were prepared by a professional Architect, it is only when the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund was created in 2001 that the setting up of a museum became the mandate of a dedicated institution.

At the AGTF, this project started in 2011 with the enlistment of the services of a professional team composed of Museologists (AGTF), Historians (UoM and Framingham University, USA), Architects (Morphos Architects Ltd; Land Concept Ltd), Engineers

(Nuzeebun Project Consultants Ltd; Prodesign Ltd), Quantity Surveyor (Chuttur and Partners Ltd), Graphic Designer (Design Element Ltd), and an Archaeologist (Dr Diego Calaon, Italy).

First, the project raised the need to define key concepts and address questions. The main question was what do we want to show at BRIC? What should be the main focus? Considering that Apravasi Ghat is a World Heritage Site, the focus was naturally put on the experience of INDENTURE in Mauritius and on the reasons why Apravasi Ghat is so significant for the history of humanity.

It was also important to consider WHAT does the public want to know? To this purpose, several audience surveys and feedback from visitors were taken into consideration during the elaboration of the display. In particular, it seemed important to explain where indentured labourers came from and why did they come to Mauritius? The concern of the audience was also on the rights of the indentured labourers and to which extent was an indentured labourer free?

The second step was to define HOW should information be presented to the public and what would be the best means of communication / media to convey information? Audience surveys were also used to have an understanding of the visitor expectations. Several working sessions took place to address questions and define concepts: this stage was essential to develop a detailed display plan.

Based on the display plan, the design phase started to materialise the proposed concepts into technical and architectural plans. The constant interaction between the team members was essential to come up with final plans for BRIC.

After a call for tender, the interior and landscaping works were undertaken as per the plans of the Architects by Ramloll Bhooshan Construction and Renovation Ltd (the selected bidder) from 2nd May to mid-November 2013. Once the interior and landscaping works are completed, the mounting of the exhibition will require three months to be completed.

The opening of the Interpretation Centre is scheduled for March 2014.

Conservation of the Old labourers Quarters of Trianon

Ashvin Nemchand, Research Assistant

The “Old labourers Quarters” (Trianon barracks), is one of the rare surviving structures in Mauritius which offers an insight into the living conditions of Indian indentured labourers. As such, the “Old Labourers Quarters” reflect the knowledge, beliefs and traditions of the diverse and rich cultural background of the indentured labourers who came to Mauritius. It is therefore important to restore and conserve this historic building as it is directly and tangibly linked with the way of life in the sugar camps during and after the indenture period.

While restoring and conserving historic buildings, it is essential to preserve the authenticity and integrity of the structure. The main principle in conservation is to respect the use of traditional techniques and materials for restoration. There are mainly three reasons in adopting such techniques. Firstly, the use of repair materials which are the same as the original to provide continuity with the past, secondly, by matching the original materials and techniques, the repair material will age just like the original. Finally, it was found that the use of modern materials along with modern technique could cause serious alterations to the original fabrics of many masonry buildings.

Repainting of the joints of the exterior walls of the barracks

Repainting of joints is one of the processes described in the conservation project of the Trianon barracks. Repainting is undertaken as a part of the process to restore the ability of the masonry wall to control water ingress and preserve its historical authenticity. In April 2013, raking of the joints of the barracks started. Raking is the process of removing the decayed mortars from the joints of the stones. The mortars are carefully removed with a fine chisel or other implements which fit into the joints to a minimum depth of 25 mm.



Raking of the exterior walls of the barracks © AGTF

After the removal of the decayed mortar, the joints are washed with water to remove any remaining particles. Moreover, when doing the lime pointing, the joints are wetted in order to avoid water suction from the mortar. While carrying out the lime pointing works, it is important that the mortar be fully pushed and filled inside the joints to avoid air gaps. After the pointing has been completed, the repointed areas are sprayed with water during the setting time to prevent the finished work from drying out too quickly.



Repointing of the exterior wall © AGTF

The raking and repointing process on the exterior walls of the Trianon barracks started in the April 2013 and was completed in July 2013. Presently, the interior walls of the first 6 chambers are being documented and the algae growth is being treated before the removal of the dead mortar and pointing of the interior walls.



Spraying of water on repointed joints © AGTF

The Trianon barracks provide insights into the traditional knowledge of past artisans who built these buildings. In a few years, it is planned to include Trianon Heritage Site in the heritage trail on indentured labour among Apravasi Ghat World Heritage Site and the Vagrant Depot.



Repointed walls of the barracks © AGTF



Bramer Bank prior to restoration in 2009



Bramer Bank after rehabilitation in 2013

Adapting historical buildings for modern use

Natasha Kheddoo-Ramcharitar, Research Assistant

Surrounded by historical structures built during the French and British periods, the city of Port Louis has seen its environs transformed from an old to a modern urban area. Unfortunately, modernisation also led to the destruction of many of these historical buildings. As a result, only few old structures have survived today. Considering that it is the capital city of Mauritius, Port Louis has been the place where significant development has occurred. This development has materialized into modern buildings with new designs that sometimes detract from the traditional style of the city. For some, investing in our past to build our future can be more profitable than spending on new buildings. For example, old structures can be reused for commercial activities. This is called "Adaptive reuse" when an old building is converted from its original use to another. Adaptive reuse gives life to a site, rather than keeping it unused or opting for its demolition. It is generally accepted that using heritage buildings allow their long term preservation as opposed to discouraging their use.

It is considered that successful adaptive reuse projects are the ones which best respect and preserve the building's heritage significance and that add a contemporary layer providing additional value for future use. Sometimes, adaptive reuse is the only way that a building's fabric can be properly cared for and interpreted, while making better use of the building itself. Generally, when a building can no longer serve its original purpose, a new use through adaption may be the only way to preserve its heritage significance.

The Buffer Zones of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Property include many historic structures that were identified during the cataloguing and documentation process initiated in 2006. Since then, it is noted that the demolition of old buildings is still a reality. According to the owners, these old buildings were not profitable for their business as there were too many maintenance problems such as leakage, insufficient space to run their daily commerce, high cost implication for maintenance and difficulty to obtain insurance from insurance companies.

In order to enhance the traditional style of Port Louis, the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund prepared a Planning Policy Guidance (PPG6) for the buffer zones which was approved in June 2011. This PPG provides also measures to halt demolition and guide development towards the reuse of Port Louis's traditional style for both old and new buildings. The objective is to encourage architectural harmony in the buffer zones. The trend to rehabilitate the original style of Port Louis stated in this planning document was followed by some promoters who have shown keen interest to reuse the old buildings for their daily activities. We have noted recently the development of several projects that show good examples in the area. One recent example of an adaptive reuse in the Buffer Zone of the AGWHP is the Bramer Bank situated at Place d'Armes. Built during the 1830's by private companies, the building was used for retail purpose. Restoration work of the building was initiated some three years back and was opened to public this year offering banking facilities.

Mr. Moussa I. Rawat, Chairman of Bramer Corporation Ltd and Director of Bramer Banking Corporation Ltd, explains: “Bramer Corporation’s growth philosophy adheres to the principle of respect of all regulations inclusive of building regulations and the promotion of sustainable development and architecture. We decided to make our contribution to the rich Mauritian architecture legacy by keeping the exterior and the interior of the building as close to what existed already. The preservation of our heritage is priceless and we believe that we have succeeded. We invite the Public and other Port Louis land and building owners to visit our headquarters so that they can experience the fact that preservation and modernization can be symbiotic.”

A similar example of adaptive reuse in the Buffer Zone is the Joonas & Co Ltd building located at corner Louis Pasteur Street and Royal Street. Restoration of the building was carried out before the proclamation of the PPG6. The building has been well restored and currently operates as showroom for tiles and sanitary wares. The Joonas building has definitely added value to the area and has

encouraged other promoters to invest in rehabilitation projects.

Similarly, the Currimjee building located on the opposite of the Joonas building is at present undergoing restoration work. The building was constructed during the 1880’s and was unused for more than 10 years. Listed as a Grade 1 building (equivalent to National Heritage), the structure was under major threat and was in need of urgent repair. The building was then acquired by Currimjee Jeewanjee & Co Ltd who took the initiative to restore it and to convert it into office space.

Today, development projects for adaptive reuse are not only limited to the Buffer Zone. Promoters who believe in heritage rehabilitation are now investing in old buildings located in other commercial areas of Port Louis. The building occupying the Nando’s restaurant situated at Sir William Newton Street is one such good example. Adaptive reuse has the potential to add value to the buffer zones and revive the historic centre of Port Louis that was, in the early days, a cultural and lively city.

AGTF Publications 2012 – 2013

Gokoola and Angaje



Indira Devi Gyaram, AGTF Programme Coordinator

the Village. The Gokoola temple is among the first Hindu temples built during British period.

Another publication launched this year is “Angaje: Explorations into the History, Society and Culture of Indentured Immigrants and their Descendants in Mauritius”. It was launched in April 2013 at the Subramaniam Hall, Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Moka. The publication is composed of articles divided in 3 volumes: volume 1 focusses on the early years of indenture, volume 2 provides insights into the indenture period and experience and volume 3 explains the legacy of indenture in our society today. The objective of this publication was to encourage the new generation to research and to write about Indentured Labourers in Mauritius and elsewhere and also to provide the latest state of multi-disciplinary research on indenture labour. Through this publication, the AGTF is fulfilling the objectives of its Act, its management plan and the recommendations of UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee with regards to research on Indenture. The books also tell us about the transition from slavery to indenture and the diversity of the Indentured population. The immigrants and their descendants struggled for their social and economic mobility and for a better tomorrow for themselves and their children. They became small planters, Cultivators, Shopkeepers, *Sirdars*, Job contractors, Businessmen, Lawyers, Doctors, Scholars, Politicians, *Pundits* and Notables and at the same time, they reproduced their cultural traditions in Mauritius.

In line with the objective of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund Act 2001 to support publications related to the indentured labour system, the AGTF launched two publications in the year 2013: “Gokoola: Family, Temple and Village, By the Banian Tree We Stand” and “Angaje: Explorations into the history, society and culture of indentured Immigrants and their descendants in Mauritius”.

The publication entitled “Gokoola: Family, Temple and village, by the Banian Tree we Stand”, co-authored by V.Govinden of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute and Dr. Marina Carter of the United Kingdom, was launched in December 2012 in Gokoola village. The book relates the life of Immigrant Gokoola who arrived in Mauritius as an Indian Indentured Labourer in 1841. As a *Sirdar*, job contractor, land owner and land speculator in the north of the Island, he played a very important role in the establishment of Gokoola Temple and the village which bears his name. This event also marks the 166th anniversary of the arrival of immigrant Gokoola in Mauritius and the 145th anniversary of the erection of the Hindu Temple of

Les Chantiers de Restauration et d'Archéologie du Lazaret de la Grande Chaloupe

Article (réactualisé) extrait de la revue Akoz n° 31 (mai 2008)

Vieux de 150 ans, perdu dans cette Grande Chaloupe, caché dans un écrin naturel exceptionnel, délaissé par les institutions en dépit de sa protection au titre des monuments historiques, exposé aux vents, pluies et cyclones, voué au vandalisme de quelques désœuvrés ignorant probablement tout de leur histoire, le Lazaret se mourrait.

Ce lieu de quarantaine, même en ruine, constitue pourtant l'un des sites les plus chargés d'histoire de l'île de La Réunion et très certainement celui qui témoigne le mieux de l'aventure de son peuplement.

C'est dans les années 2000 que le Conseil général de la Réunion, propriétaire du Lazaret, s'est engagé à le sauver de la destruction et de l'oubli. 2008, Année Européenne du Dialogue Interculturel, fut l'occasion de restituer aux Réunionnais une part irremplaçable de leur patrimoine. La célébration du cent cinquantième anniversaire de l'établissement en 2011 a marqué la fin des travaux de restauration du lazaret N°1. Lors des Journées européennes du patrimoine en 2013, une exposition présentera les premiers résultats du chantier de fouille qui a été engagé durant une année sur le site du lazaret N°2.

Le Lazaret de la Grande Chaloupe ou les prémisses de la diversité culturelle réunionnaise

Le 19^{ème} siècle a vu s'ériger un peu partout dans le monde, aux abords des grands ports d'immigration, des lieux de quarantaine sanitaire, lieux d'isolement, de prévention et de

traitement. La Réunion en a abrité plusieurs dont celui de la Grande Chaloupe, le dernier construit sur l'île et le seul dont il reste aujourd'hui des traces tangibles.

Ce lazaret est formé de deux ensembles de bâtiments distincts, érigés de part et d'autre de la ravine de la Grande Chaloupe dans une vallée isolée et encaissée se situant à la croisée des communes de Saint-Denis et de la Possession. Respectivement dénommés Lazaret N°1 et Lazaret N°2, ils ont été construits à partir de 1861 pour accueillir en quarantaine des immigrants venus massivement d'Afrique de l'Est, des Comores, de Chine et surtout de l'Inde. Leur arrivée correspond à l'apogée de l'industrie sucrière à La Réunion, période durant laquelle les planteurs doivent recruter hors de l'île la main d'œuvre nombreuse que cette nouvelle activité économique requiert et dont l'abolition de la traite, puis de l'esclavage l'a privée.

Jusqu'aux années 1930, Le lazaret a accueilli des dizaines de milliers d'immigrants engagés sous contrat. Une majorité d'Indiens jusqu'en 1880, suivis après cette date de Mozambicains, d'Antandroys de Madagascar, de Rodriguais et aussi d'immigrants libres débarquant d'une zone infestée.

Aujourd'hui, chercheurs, associations et institutions s'accordent sur la charge symbolique liée au Lazaret de

Catherine Chane-Kune, directrice de la culture (DCS) au Conseil général de La Réunion

Jean Barbier, conservateur en chef du patrimoine, directeur du Musée historique de Villèle et du Lazaret de la Grande Chaloupe à la Réunion.

la Grande Chaloupe et se mobilisent afin de le voir protégé.

Les préalables du chantier de restauration

Mais avant le lancement opérationnel du chantier, il aura fallu démêler le partage des droits et des responsabilités sur ces bâtiments, exercice long et complexe en raison du double statut du Lazaret, à la fois départemental et domanial. Cette survivance du régime colonial impose au propriétaire, en l'occurrence le Conseil général, d'obtenir avant toute intervention l'autorisation préalable des services de l'Etat, celui-ci étant titulaire d'un droit d'usage illimité.

Après le diagnostic des ruines et l'élaboration d'un plan pluriannuel d'intervention, une attention très particulière a été portée aux moyens d'associer la population de proximité à la sauvegarde d'un patrimoine d'exception qui fait partie de leur environnement quotidien. Peu nombreux - quelques dizaines de familles - vivant dans un habitat traditionnel, dans un environnement à la fois contraint et bucolique, les habitants de la Grande Chaloupe ne pouvaient pas être laissés à l'écart de cette opération.

Le choix du chantier-école a permis d'inscrire le projet dans un objectif d'insertion, de faire intervenir des publics en difficulté sociale, de

leur dispenser des formations et de leur offrir des perspectives de débouchés professionnels. Il a aussi permis de poursuivre une démarche d'appropriation d'un patrimoine de proximité. Ce sont donc en priorité des habitants de la Grande Chaloupe qui ont été recrutés sur ce premier chantier.

Ce parti pris, associé aux considérations administratives et techniques, a conduit à organiser le chantier par tranches. Les bâtiments du Lazaret N°2 se situent en amont des premiers et sont davantage

les a aussi amenés à suivre, une journée par semaine, un programme de remise à niveau destiné à faciliter leur réinsertion dans le monde du travail et à tirer profit de la spécialité acquise sur le chantier. Sur une soixantaine de stagiaires accueillis depuis 2004, les deux tiers exercent aujourd'hui une activité salariée.

La partie opérationnelle a commencé par les murs d'enceinte du cimetière, de l'infirmerie, et la reconstruction à l'identique des latrines situées à proximité. Les techniques employées sont similaires à celles de l'époque de la construction. Les interventions ont

La restauration de l'infirmerie (ou « quartier d'isolement ») a constitué la seconde étape. Destiné à accueillir une exposition permanente sur l'histoire du lieu, ce bâtiment a fait l'objet d'une campagne de travaux qui a conduit à lui assurer le clos et le couvert, nouvelle toiture, restitution des portes et des fenêtres, et faciliter l'accessibilité de ses abords en y aménageant des allées en pierre.

Les dépendances du lazaret N°1 ont l'objet de tous les soins des acteurs du chantier ; elles les ont en retour gratifiés de quelques heureuses surprises archéologiques : une pièce en sous-sol, des restes de carrelage en terre cuite...

Le chantier s'est achevé sur une opération de consolidation de l'un des deux dortoirs qui accueillaient les immigrants à l'arrivée, l'autre étant occupé par les services de la direction de l'Équipement.



Les étudiants en fouille au Lazaret
Source: Jean Barbier

isolés. Composés notamment des splendides vestiges d'un dortoir et d'un bateau-lavoir, ils ne sont pas encore concernés par la campagne de restauration qui a commencé en 2004 sur le Lazaret N°1.

La restauration du Lazaret N°1

La démarche de proximité et l'objectif d'insertion ont conduit à proposer aux stagiaires, en amont du chantier, une préparation aussi bien théorique (intervention de l'historienne Michèle Marimoutou sur l'histoire du site de la Grande Chaloupe et des lazarets) que pratique (visites de chantiers de restauration du patrimoine bâti et sensibilisation aux spécificités d'une intervention sur des sites historiques fragiles). Chantier-école, la formation

porté sur la mise à jour des fondations des anciens murs, la consolidation des maçonneries, la restitution des parties manquantes, étapes obligées du plan de sauvetage des murs et autant d'occasions pour les stagiaires de s'initier aux techniques de taille du moellon de basalte, de montage de murs en maçonnerie traditionnelle, de réalisation d'enduits à la chaux. Enjeu non négligeable, ce chantier de restauration reste ouvert aux bénévoles, étudiants désireux de compléter leur formation théorique, volontaires suffisamment attachés au patrimoine réunionnais pour lui consacrer un peu de leur temps, cadres associatifs à la recherche d'une expérience pratique de gestion de projets de sauvegarde du patrimoine matériel.

Un partenariat exemplaire

Le chantier de restauration du Lazaret de la Grande Chaloupe rassemble de nombreux partenaires.

En premier lieu les institutions - la Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles, Le Conservatoire du Littoral et des Espaces Lacustres, la commune de La Possession, l'Agence Départementale d'Insertion - qui rassemblées autour du Conseil général, ont pris une part active dans la conception autant que dans la mise en œuvre de ce projet culturel. Deux associations ensuite ont respectivement assuré le portage technique et humain du chantier: le CHAM (Chantier Architecture Médiévale – antenne de La Réunion, spécialisée dans les chantiers de monuments historiques) et l'association CAP INSERTION qui jusqu'à cette année est l'employeur des stagiaires en insertion.

Et puis, la population de la Grande Chaloupe qui est constamment associée à la conservation du site. Dans l'œuvre de restauration elle-même, dans l'entretien des abords, dans la sollicitation de la mémoire

vivante des lieux dont certains d'entre eux sont dépositaires. Aujourd'hui, la population se veut un peu gardienne du Lazaret. Et c'est sans doute cette surveillance discrète et bienveillante qui explique que ceux-ci n'aient subi depuis quatre ans aucune sorte de dégradation.

Une première restitution au public

Rattaché scientifiquement au musée historique de Villèle dont il prolonge et enrichit le propos, le Lazaret de la Grande Chaloupe est restauré dans le double souci d'une protection durable et d'une valorisation pédagogique du site. Une étude sera prochainement lancée pour finaliser les conditions d'une nouvelle affectation des bâtiments qui demeureront à coup sûr des lieux d'éducation au patrimoine. Le chantier reçoit déjà des visiteurs, curieux de l'histoire, promeneurs et même des écoles accueillies dans le cadre de « classes du patrimoine ».

En novembre 2008, les quatre premières années de travaux se sont achevées par une présentation au public d'espaces restaurés. Une exposition dans l'infirmerie, un film

documentaire dans les dépendances, un ouvrage de textes inédits et de photographies d'artiste, une signalétique des espaces extérieurs donneront à mieux connaître et à mieux comprendre l'histoire des lieux et les enjeux du chantier de restauration. Un colloque international d'histoire, co-organisé par le Conseil général et l'Association des Historiens de l'Océan Indien (AHIOI) s'est tenu à Saint-Denis, évoquant dans le même temps les singularités du dialogue des cultures dans cette région du monde. Juste après, le chantier a repris son cours, pour s'achever en 2011, après avoir sauvé ce qui pouvait encore être sauvé.

Un chantier archéologique

Mené en 2012 par le Département de La Réunion, sous la direction de l'archéologue Anne-Laure Dijoux, à l'emplacement du lazaret N°2, ce chantier a livré d'importants vestiges liés à l'occupation du lieu durant la seconde moitié du 19^e siècle et la première moitié du siècle suivant. Une campagne de prospection archéologique a été menée sur le site de l'ancien cimetière. Des sépultures

ont été mises au jour dont certaines ont fait l'objet d'expertises réalisées dans un laboratoire d'étude spécialisé pour ce type d'analyse. Les résultats de ces travaux de recherche seront présentés en septembre prochain sous la forme d'une exposition à l'occasion des Journées européennes du patrimoine.

Le Lazaret peut aujourd'hui témoigner pour très longtemps encore de la rencontre des peuples et des cultures qui est la marque de la société réunionnaise, ancienne et contemporaine. Il constitue à cet égard un véritable centre de recherche et contribue à la diffusion des connaissances sur l'histoire du peuplement de l'île. En septembre sera présenté un documentaire produit par le centre et relatant le voyage à Rodrigues des Perrine, descendants des derniers engagés originaires de cette île et installés depuis les années 1930 au lieu-dit la Cafrine dans le sud de La Réunion.



Photo nocturne du lazaret. Source: Jean Barbier

THE GAMMAT MUSIC OF MAURITIUS:

A Unique Genre brought by Indentured Immigrants from the Bhojpuri Belt of India and developed on Mauritian Soil



Dr. (Mrs.) Sarita Boodhoo, Chairperson of Bhojpuri Speaking Union

The **Gammat** Music is a style of singing that takes its origin from the Bhojpuri Belt of Bihar and UP in India. This tradition of singing has been transmitted by the **Girmitias**,

the indentured immigrants who crossed the Kala Pani to come to Mauritius as from 2nd November 1834. It is one of the richest forms of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mauritius. Over the years, the Gammat developed its own unique style proper to Mauritius. This style of singing is also prevalent in South Africa, Fiji, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname where it has evolved in variant forms.

In Suriname, it is known as **Baithak Gana**. However, there is a common thread that runs through all of them in the manner and style the songs are sung, in their rhythm, tempo and tunes. They have also been taken to Holland by third waves of migrants from Suriname to Holland, like Moti Mahre, to USA and Canada by singers of the Caribbean Countries, to England and France by Mauritian singers like Shashi Sohadeb.

L'Accroche

In Mauritius, the **Gammat** is held in the **L'accroche** or jugal **bandi / sawal – jawab** setting, where two groups of singers and their accompanists face each other on the stage in a lyrical duel. These singers compose their own songs and engage in a musical question and answer genre on the spot.

The singers challenge each other and have to be adept and resourceful. They draw their inspiration and ideas from the Hindu Scriptures such as the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, Gita, Satyarth Prakash and works of various saints like Kabir. They also base their composition on day-to-day life, eternal values, nature, and life in general and societal happenings. The singers need a good command of Hindi and Bhojpuri.

Many singers resort to a Guru to polish their lyrics or to compose their morceaux.

Gammat has a great hold on the audience: it has an electrifying impact. The **Gammat** singer plays his own harmonium and is accompanied by **tabla, chimta, dholak, lota and dafni**.

Sona Noyan – King of Gammat

Sona Noyan who passed away on February 8th this year at the age of 67 is accredited to be the king of Gammat

because of his unique style of singing, the vibrancy of his lyrics and tunes that he developed over five decades. He has left behind a rich legacy of innumerable memorable songs.

The **Bhojpuri Speaking Union** under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Culture paid a vibrant homage to Sona Noyan on May 31 this year at a **Shradhanjali Gammat** night at his native village Trois Bras, Petit Raffray. On this occasion, his wife Deorane Ewarea, lifelong companion in his musical journey was honored with a shawl and a trophy for his lifelong achievement. The street where stands his house has also been named **Sona Noyan Gali** to pay tribute to this great Bhojpuri Singer.

Sona Noyan has entered **l'accroche** with his formidable 'opponents' or challengers such as veteran singers like Basant Soopaul, Roi du Sud of Riviere des Creoles, the Dawosingh brothers – Jeewan and Rohit 'Pailles', Freeman Lagare, Parsad 'Plaine Magnien' or Thermogene of Tranquebar.

Style of Singing

A style very much particular to Sona Noyan is that of throwing back his hair kept deliberately long which would fall on his face again and again, as he played his harmonium in that slanted position and sang in that throaty voice of his which would set ablaze, in frenzy his mesmerized fans. Sona Noyan could hold his audience spellbound for the whole night.

It is to be noted that the Government of Mauritius has included the **Gammat genre of singing** as an important aspect of the intangible cultural heritage of the country in the inventory and nomination dossier sent to UNESCO. As a safeguarding measure against threats by modernity and DJ culture, the **Bhojpuri Speaking Union** has undertaken among its activities to promote, propagate and encourage the **Gammat** style of singing among the younger generation of singers.

We give for the benefit of readers a rendering of Sona Noyan's most famous and prized song (MBC Bhojpuri Bahar TV competition of 1996) – **Khale Pile** and a translation in English by the author - Dr. (Mrs.) Sarita Boodhoo.

Khale Pile

Bhojpuri Version

Zindagi mein kaba
 Han Zindagi mein kaba
 Khale pile jile bhaiya
 Zindagi mein ka ba
 Gharwa duwarwa
 Sab haije rahjala
 Char din ke chandini ba
 Phir andheri raat ba
 Hathi aur ghora
 Sab haije rahjala
 Khali hath jala
 Sab duniya se baba
 Ik din ba aana ho to
 Ek din ba jana
 Para pari sab jala
 Aague piche sabjala
 Koyi na rahalba

Khale pile jile bhaiya
 Zindagi mein ka ba
 Zindagi mein kaba
 Han Zindagi mein kaba
 Khale pile jile bhaiya

English Version

What is there in life
 Yes, what is there in life
 Eat, drink, live o brother
 What is there in life
 Your house, Your belongings
 All will be left behind
 The moonlight lasts for four days
 There after follows the dark night
 Your elephants, your horses
 All will be left behind
 All will depart empty handed
 From this world, O Man
 (If it is written) that you will come
 one day
 Then for sure, you will depart one day
 By turn, everybody will have to go
 Some today, some tomorrow
 No one has come to stay (for good)
 Eat, drink, live o brother
 What is there in life
 What is there in life
 Yes, what is there in life
 Eat, drink, live o brother

Geet Gawai

An invaluable piece of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indian Indentured labourers

Kiran Chuttoo-Jankee, Research Assistant



Birth ritual- 'Jeera Jawaine' song. Source: AGTF Photo Collection.

Geet gawai is one of the practices identified as a legacy of indenture in Mauritian society. Generally when people talk of geet gawai they refer to the rituals, songs and dance performed as part of the Hindu wedding ceremony. However, this term is not only limited to the famous Friday night rituals and celebrations but it includes all the songs and dances performed during rites of passages starting from birth to death. Moreover, it was also part of daily routine life. For instance, Geet gawai which literally means singing was also done while grinding grains and spices, while children were playing or were simply in the form of lullabies to sleep babies and children. It has many tangible elements associated with it. It is a tradition that migrated to our island together with



Sabad- sung during funeral ceremony
Source: AGTF Photo Collection.

the Indian immigrants that came as indentured labourers and also as traders or for other purposes.

Performed during rites of passage, Geet Gawai is a combination of social practices, rituals, music—both vocal and instrumental, dance and drama. It is also an embodiment of knowledge, know-how, skills and practices developed by its bearers. It displays the community's ways of thinking and beliefs through the Bhojpuri language and Oral traditions. It is a way of life rather than just performance. Without it the practitioners cannot perform any rite of passage, ritual, traditional healing system, social organisation or festival. However, there are particular persons traditionally associated with *Geet Gawai* and there are specific persons associated with each aspect of the social practice or ritual. Some of them only men perform (*sabad* and *baharya puja* for instance) and others only women (*lalna*, *harparawri*, *jantsar* etc).

The first bearers of the *Geet Gawai* tradition arrived in Mauritius in the 19th Century. Those families continued their tradition and its transmission through word of mouth whether it is playing of instruments, dance, music, craftsmanship, rites or rituals. With the evolution of environment, influence of other cultures and change in time and space, this element underwent lots of transformations. For instance, women no more sing and dance during weddings in the confined rooms where men are not allowed; today gents are invited to join in. Work songs like *jantsar* are no more practised since grinding mills have been replaced by electric grinders. New musical instruments have been introduced in addition to the traditional instruments to create music. Large variety of entertainment through technology

and media led new generations to slow down interest in this element of heritage which resulted in scarcity of practitioners. Nevertheless, the demand for *Geet Gawai* is quite high mainly during birth ceremonies, weddings and funeral ceremonies (for Ramayan chanting and *sabad*). *Sabad* is sung during funeral ceremonies and according to surveys done in the Oral History and Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage projects carried out by the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund, there are hardly two groups that sing *sabad* in Mauritius and the presence of these groups are highly solicited. The practitioners have seized the opportunity to commercialise it in the sense that people have to pay groups of practitioners to perform *Geet Gawai* during rites of passages. Also, Compact Disks have been introduced by tradition bearers, singers and musicians. Therefore, though in its evolved way, even today, *Geet Gawai* is practised throughout the country among diverse groups of the Mauritian people.

The bearers of this element are committed to develop, preserve and promote *Geet Gawai* in Mauritius. It has an inseparable connection with the descendants of Indian immigrants in the country. There is today the need to preserve the essential parts of the ancient forms of *Geet Gawai* so that it does not lose its authenticity.

The Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund inscribed under criterion VI on the World Heritage List which refers to the Intangible cultural heritage is fully engaged in the identification and promotion of all the Intangible Cultural Heritage related to indenture. The AGTF embarked on an Inventory of elements of intangible heritage related to Indenture that was partly funded by UNESCO in March 2010 to identify, safeguard and promote intangible cultural heritage with a view to proposing elements for inscription. Irrespective of domains (i.e. oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices, or traditional craftsmanship), the project inventoried some 70 elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage related to the indenture labour system.

Beyond the inventory, the activities carried out by the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund to highlight Intangible Cultural Heritage are as follows:

- Living exhibitions organised yearly, the “*Varshik Parampara Utsav*” in which young and old generations present folk songs and dances and in which traditional game players and craftsmen are invited to present their knowhow and share traditional delicacies;
- A three-day workshop, “*Bhojpuri at the crossroads*,” also organized by the Trust Fund's Oral History Unit at the University of Mauritius in July, 2010;
- An audio CD of birth songs from Mauritius and India, sung in Bhojpuri and called *Sohar*, or Intangible Heritage (released in November, 2010, it is the first in a series that the Trust Fund intends to publish;

- Launching of E-book of tales from Mauritius in English, French, Creole and Bhojpuri by the Prime Minister Dr Navin Ramgoolam in 2011;
- The presentation of a replica of an Indenture Village in November 2012. It included a living exhibition of the traditional culture of descendants of Indentured labourers.

The National Heritage Fund is body responsible for ICH. The AGTF collaborated with the NHF and MAC in the preparation of nomination dossiers of Geet Gawai that has been sent to UNESCO for possible inscription on the Representative list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

This element is not only an invaluable piece of Intangible Heritage but is also an important social medium for communication among family members who get together and exchange meaningful and emotional moments. It leads to intra-community interaction and cohesion by spreading the message of peace and harmonious living in society at large.

Rasam and Sagoo

Aartee Pydatalli, Field Guide

More than 90 percent of indentured labourers who came to Mauritius were of Indian origin. They were from different parts of India such as Bihar and Calcutta and brought along their culinary practice. Today, these recipes reflect the preservation of memories and traditions among Mauritian families. They are timeless and treasured recipes passed down from one generation to the next.

Among the various origins of foods in Mauritius, we have that of the *Andhra Pradesh*. The culinary traditions from *Andhra Pradesh* are some of the richest in the world. This cuisine is reputedly known for the use of spices such as cloves, cardamom, cinnamon and turmeric and ghee. We are here presenting two recipes; Rasam and Sagoo.



Rasam (rason)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of small yellow lentils (*dal tipwa*)
- 1 tsp. black pepper (grinded)
- 3 tsp. cumin seeds (grinded)
- 2 dry red chilies' sliced in half
- 6 or 7 curry leaves
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 3 gloves of garlic (paste)
- 2 tomatoes (paste)
- 2 tsp. concentrated tamarind paste
- 1 small onion (sliced)
- Salt to taste
- Coriander leaves to garnish

Recipe:

1. Lentils: Wash the small yellow lentils with water multiple times and pour in a pressure cooker. Add 5 cups of water and the turmeric powder to the lentils. Cook until the small yellow lentils are soft. Reserve aside.
 2. Spice mixture: In a pan, heat ghee, fry the onions and add black pepper, cumin seeds, curry leaves, garlic, red chilies and tomatoes. Cook for 3 mins.
 3. Add the spice mixture to the yellow lentils. Mix in the tamarind paste.
 4. Add water and salt. Bring to boil and garnish with coriander leaves.
- Serve hot.

Sagoo desert

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of sagoo
- 3 cup of water
- 3 tsp. graded nut
- 2 tsp. dry raisins
- 1 tsp. cardamom powder
- 3 tsp. *zamberic* (Mung beans) (slightly roasted and crushed)
- ½ tsp. ginger powder
- 3 tsp. almonds
- ½ cup of sugar

Recipe:

1. Wash the sagoo and soak it for 10 minutes.
 2. In a deep pan, boil water with the *zamberic* for 15 minutes. Then, add the sagoo.
 3. Keep stirring the sagoo on medium heat until they are cooked. Sagoo are cooked when they become transparent.
 4. In another pan, heat the ghee and add raisin and almonds. Cook until it turns slightly brown.
 4. Add the sugar, graded nut, ginger powder and the frying raisin and cardamom to the sago. Mixed it well till it thickens.
- Serve hot with appalam.



From Ledger to Treasure: The Indentured Labour Photographic Portraits

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Portrait of Chinna Sunnasee (name as per record) taken in 1875 after arrival in Mauritius at the age of 6.

Source: Photograph courtesy of Sunnasee family

The Indentured Labour photographic portraits were originally created as a tool to identify and consequently control the indentured labour population in Mauritius, however today they are something much more in the lives of Mauritian people. My research understands photographs to be more than an image that records a moment in time or identifies a subject. Photographs can also be objects that both inform and perform social functions. They help to tell us about the life and times of the people being photographed and they can also tell us about the intentions and perspectives of the photographer taking the image. Ultimately, photographs are made for an audience and therefore

the experience of those that view them is integral to their function. Therefore, photographs have complex social relationships with the people who engage with them and these relationships shift and change over time and in different contexts. My research is concerned with the social significance of these photographs and the changes they have been through over time.

Today, the Indentured Labour portraits found in the MGI photographic archives (PG archives) are often displayed on the covers of books, magazines and whenever the topic of indenture is discussed. These images are often referred to in context of the information that is attached to them: the name of the person; where they originated from; the port they departed from and when they arrived; on what ship they arrived on; their age; their marriage status; their caste; their height; where they worked, and finally, the all-important 6-digit immigration number. Although these portraits are strongly embedded within this historical data and text, it is important to recognize that as photographic images, they are remarkable in their own right.

Within the world's history of photography, these particular images mark the beginning of the photographic portrait as a form of identification. Today, this method is still used in identification systems around the globe. The scale of the photographic processes embarked upon by the British administrators, and the production of so many images can only be described as an extraordinary endeavour. The quality of the images produced at this time is commendable given that photography as a technology was still in its infancy in the mid 1800's. The images produced are extraordinary due to the skilful use of light and pose: as a result, the facial features, clothes, hair, jewellery, personal bearing and expression can be clearly determined by the viewer. Ironically, these photographs, though produced in the context of surveillance and control,

can be described today as aesthetically appealing, or beautiful. Perhaps the most remarkable point about these images is the resilience of these photographic archives (as well as the other archives), considering their neglect and lack of conservation until the 1970's when their immense historical significance was first recognised. Thankfully a large amount of the original photographic portraits have remained intact. Even though the photographic paper and processing chemicals used at the time of creation can easily become unstable when exposed to light, heat, humidity and pollution the photographs have survived! It could be said that the photographic portraits mirror the resilience and persistence of the indentured labourers themselves.

From a post-colonial perspective, these photographs represent the use of the photographic image as a tool for control and dominance by the colonizers, reflecting similar stories of photography and its use throughout the colonial era in colonies around the world. However, overtime, the agency (force) of these photographic portraits has changed. They are now viewed as Mauritian national treasures in academic, social and political spheres, and in family and individual worlds they are perceived as significant objects. When people are seeking information about their ancestor's arrival in Mauritius, they not only hope to find information, they also hope to find a photograph of their ancestor. Unfortunately, not all persons will find their ancestral photograph. Their ancestor may have arrived prior to the photographic identification system being established, or their ancestor's image may have been amongst the lost and damaged ledgers that fell victim to neglect and deterioration before the archives came under the protection and conservation of the National Archives in 1975.

When ancestor photographs such as the photograph of Chinna Sunnaisee (above) are found and viewed by their descendants, they stir up feelings and thoughts that often surprise them. The descendant often feels a personal connection with their ancestor; they finally have a face, a person to directly relate to. At times when viewing the image, they feel overwhelmed with emotions that are hard to put into words. When the photograph is of a child, strong emotions of sympathy, sorrow and wonder are experienced. The photograph encourages the descendent to reflect on the stories they have been told about their ancestors and the struggles they faced.

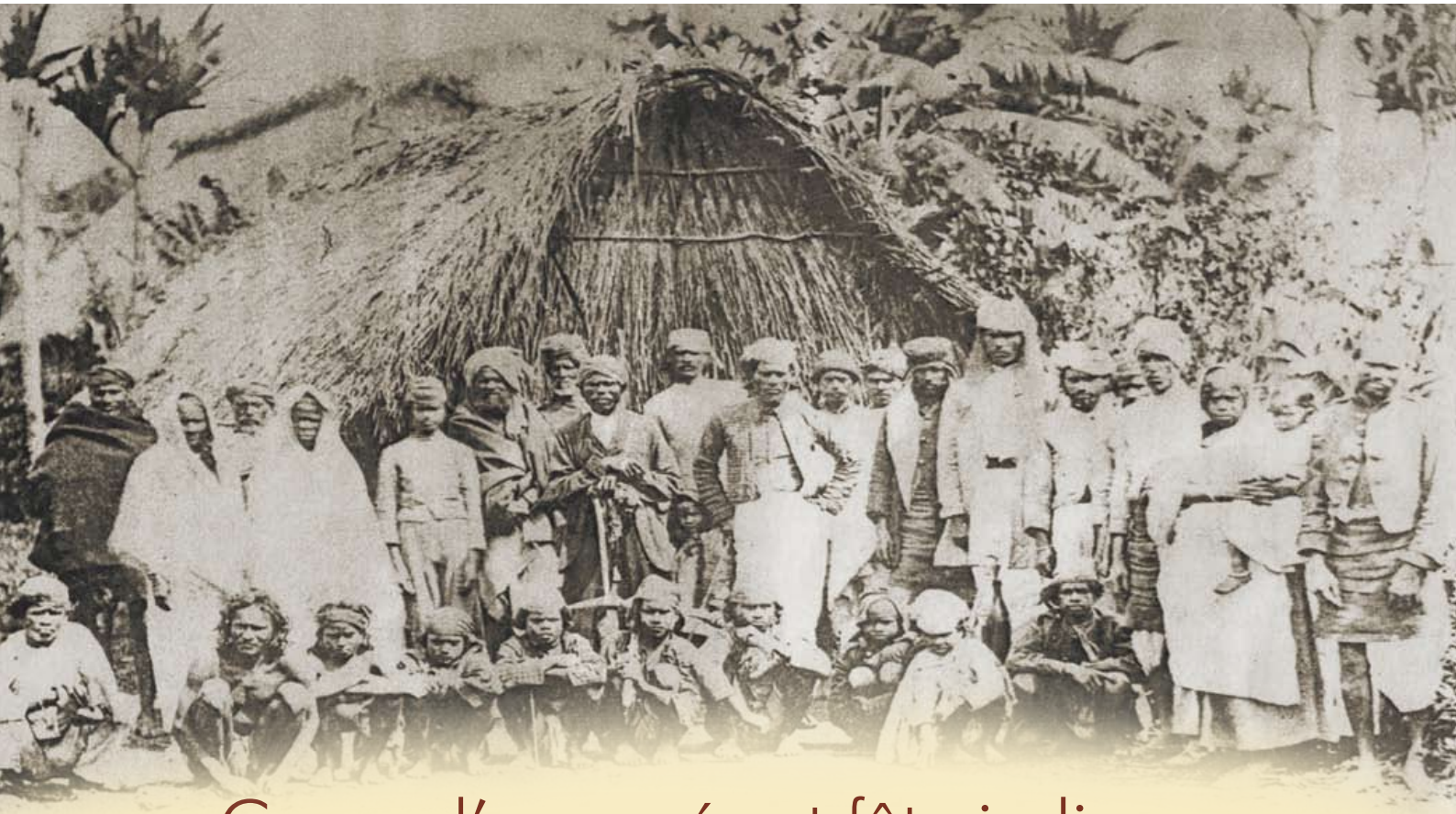
They consider the benefits they experience today as an outcome of their ancestors' trials and tribulations. When looking at their ancestor, they also search for physical resemblances. They spend time looking at their clothes; jewellery; hair; skin and facial features and contemplate the expression on their ancestors' face. After viewing the photograph, the descendent sometimes comments that their preconception of their ancestor and indentured labour has changed. They previously thought about their ancestor/s as poor, weak and powerless, however, after viewing the photograph they see them as: dignified, strong and determined.

After obtaining the photograph from the MGI archives, the descendant takes a copy of their ancestor's photograph home. The photograph is often stored safely in a file with other important documents and or framed and displayed amongst other family images in the home. They may also be included in ancestral ceremonies and religious rituals. More recently with the digitisation of the photographs, the images are now in digital form and will now reside in their descendants personal computers. This transferring of the ancestor's image from the archives into the home of their descendants begins a new phase and journey in the life of the photographic image.

As can be seen, the context of the photograph continues to change overtime, as it moves from the archive to the home or into the public eye through publications and exhibitions. With each shift, the photograph changes meaning and significance. It is no longer an item in a ledger; it has transformed overtime into a highly significant object in the social lives of its descendants, a Mauritian treasure.

So far, this research has uncovered many ideas and insights regarding the significance of these photographs in Mauritius, further research will hopefully continue to broaden our understanding of these images and their complex social life.

Thank you, to all those people who have already shared their precious stories and images with me. I would be happy to meet with anyone who has already obtained their ancestral photograph or who would like to find their ancestral photograph.



Camp d'engagés et fête indienne à La Réunion au XIX^e siècle

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Les fonds iconographiques datant de l'époque coloniale restent empreints d'idéologie fort contestable, et sa lecture nécessite un regard distancié et critique. Nous analysons une photographie et un dessin issus des archives qui témoignent de l'habitat des engagés indiens et de leurs mœurs domestiques et religieuses dans les espaces assignés de la plantation.

Engagés dans le camp

Habillés en grande tenue vestimentaire indienne : turban (talpa), pagne (vesti) et sari (polvé), trente engagés pausent devant le photographe. Il ne s'agit pas d'une scène de la vie quotidienne, mais d'un moment exceptionnel pour cette population laborieuse. La photographie de ces travailleurs devant leur paillote a été prise au dix-neuvième siècle à La Réunion. L'auteur, anonyme, a effectué un plan général des personnages disposés en

rangées : accroupis, les sept enfants, un adulte et deux adolescents ; debout, un adolescent et les adultes (douze hommes, trois vieillards, trois femmes et une fillette). Il n'y a aucune indication sur l'appellation du camp, et encore moins sur l'identification de ce groupe d'immigrants. Cette photographie, disparue, était consultable à la Fondation pour la Recherche à la Bibliothèque départementale de Saint-Denis. Ici l'habitat, construit entièrement avec des végétaux, est constitué d'une case fichée dans la terre dont le toit est à double pente. En 1877, Miot le Commissaire français de l'enquête internationale sur la condition des engagés indiens dans la colonie de La Réunion décrivait ainsi les camps d'Indiens : « Leurs habitations sont de deux sortes : cabanons ou paillotes. Les cabanons sont de grands bâtiments généralement en pierre, recouverts en tuiles ou de bardeaux et divisés de façon à pouvoir loger convenablement les travailleurs. Les paillotes sont des cases, séparées, en bois ou en

planches, quelquefois en galets et recouverts de paille... » Chaque pièce est occupée par plusieurs personnes : une famille quand elle est constituée, sinon plusieurs célibataires car le taux de masculinité reste élevé. Le camp est un immense dortoir où s'entassent plusieurs centaines de personnes. La surveillance qui s'y exerce n'empêche pas l'émergence des faits liés à une telle promiscuité à savoir la polyandrie. L'absence d'hygiène et une alimentation médiocre accentuaient les effets des épidémies et du paludisme endémique. L'espérance de vie moyenne était très inférieure à 50 ans.

La deuxième icône est une lithographie intitulée le Yamsé. Ce dessin montre les festivités indiennes à La Réunion et se prête à une étude de sa représentation artistique. L'image fut dessinée dans l'atelier de Roussin qui propriétaire d'une imprimerie lithographique les publia dans « les cahiers d'illustration » n° 5 en 1880. Nous dégageons les informations sur les croyances indiennes vers la fin du XIXe siècle en réalisant son iconologie. Nous analysons son mode de construction, l'interprétons et livrons la portée de l'image.



Yamsé

Le thème se réfère au Yamsé, à l'occasion des congés annuels octroyés aux engagés indiens à La Réunion. Les travailleurs sont représentés à l'occasion d'une procession religieuse pour les fêtes du Pongol au début du mois de janvier. Le titre mentionne expressément « fêtes » et « indiennes » dont l'espace environnant situe l'événement

dans la mouvance des établissements sucriers. Cette manifestation qui regroupe les travailleurs indiens épouse un itinéraire qui les mène des camps vers les plans d'eau de mer ou de rivière. La procession emprunte une artère centrale du quartier avant de regagner l'espace religieux de la Pagode dans la périphérie. Plusieurs types de personnages sont représentés. En arrière-plan se trouvent des travailleurs anonymes proches de l'usine. En second plan parmi une végétation tropicale que caractérisent le cocotier, le pandanus et les cannes à sucre, deux jeunes badauds aucunement apeurés par la scène paraissent émerveillés. Au premier plan, les acteurs de la procession sont situés sur une ligne horizontale. Les percussionnistes munis de leur instrument dont un porte la toque mènent la procession des danseurs. Le troisième s'assure de la progression en se retournant. Leurs vêtements consistent en une tunique et un pantalon. A la fin de la procession se trouve la seule femme vêtue d'un pagne et portant un panier. Au milieu sont représentés d'autres danseurs et leurs guides. A partir de la gauche, le troisième « danseur » *jako* ou *bonhom tig*, encore désigné *poulivésou* en langue tamoule est retenu à la queue touffue au sommet par un individu qui porte un bonnet

mahométan. Les guides sont vêtus simplement à l'indienne avec le turban, la tunique et le mauresque, mais seuls les danseurs sont déguisés en fauve. Les corps sont peinturlurés de rayures zébrées. Leurs têtes sont masquées et laissent sortir une paire d'oreilles pointues. Tous les Indiens sont pieds nus, mais les ongles acérés des danseurs déguisés ressemblent aux griffes

des félins. La troupe est contenue par leur guide qui atténue leur agressivité. Les derniers danseurs semblent enchaînés et sont particulièrement virulents en élançant leur bras. Le dessinateur présente ainsi les danseurs selon six positions différentes en partant du début de cortège : le premier qui marche, le second à quatre pattes, le troisième debout enchaîné de profil, le quatrième, de face, le cinquième de dos, et le sixième qui se courbe. D'aucuns portent des traits au-dessus de la bouche qui

indiquent les poils d'un tigre. Deux Indiens présentés de dos et de face et un cinquième au début de la procession paraissent surveiller la bonne marche de ces danseurs féroces. Antoine Roussin illustre dans ce dessin un aspect des croyances indiennes, mais il a aussi publié plusieurs images sur les types de populations indiennes et leurs mœurs. L'événement est présenté de manière objective en dépit des traits subjectifs liés à l'étrangeté, la curiosité et la méfiance vis à vis des mœurs indiennes qui accompagnent ses lithographies. Cette icône est significative de plusieurs époques et elle présente plusieurs enjeux. Elle montre une facette clé des croyances indiennes dans l'espace de la plantation voire dans les sociétés coloniales. Héritées des contraintes de l'administration française sous la Compagnie des Indes, les croyances indiennes

ont dû s'exprimer dans la proximité et la tolérance depuis l'époque des Etablissements français en Inde. Au XVIII^e siècle, avec la présence d'ouvriers indiens à Bourbon, ces formes de croyances d'origine musulmane ou hindoue s'interpénètrent au sein d'une dynamique religieuse pour assurer leur survie en exil. Le martyr de Kerbala est un fait convergent dans les mentalités et il sous-tend la croyance et le rituel. Ce témoignage visuel pose les concepts d'interculturalité voire d'intraculturalité pour expliciter la tolérance véhiculée dans les croyances indiennes entre les différentes confessions à l'occasion du Pongol. Les appropriations réciproques imposées pour la survie en insularité ont davantage rapproché les peuples et anticipèrent les dérives fondamentalistes.

Nouveau Site-Web sur la Musique Bhojpurie

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En 2013, en collaboration avec Nadia Guerguadj, secrétaire scientifique au CNRS, Catherine Servan-Schreiber s'est lancée dans la création d'un site-web intitulé « *Musiques indiennes en terres créoles* », [<https://sites.google.com/site/indianchutneymusic/home>]

Ce site comporte un volet historique, invitant le lecteur à découvrir les travailleurs engagés indiens envoyés au 19^e siècle dans diverses colonies, incluant l'île Maurice. Des genres musicaux originaux y sont nés afin d'apporter un peu de réconfort aux émigrés : on leur a donné le nom de "*chutney*", « épicés ». Plusieurs pays - Afrique du Sud, Guyana, Maurice, Suriname, Trinidad et Tobago - possèdent leur propre *chutney*. Partant des répertoires et des formes pratiqués en Uttar Pradesh et au Bihar, dans le nord-est de l'Inde actuelle, les immigrants ont inventé, réinventé ou créé des musiques nouvelles par fusion et appropriation d'éléments rencontrés dans leur pays d'installation.

Dans un premier temps, les auteurs proposent de découvrir l'Histoire de la diaspora indienne, l'importance de Calcutta et de la culture du dépôt, le bhojpurie et les faits musicaux des lieux d'origine des travailleurs engagés en Inde. Ensuite, un deuxième volet est consacré à Maurice et la culture musicale bhojpurie: musique, instruments de musique, chants en bhojpurie (avec leur traduction en français et parfois une bande sonore). L'auteur évoque la rencontre avec le séga qui « incarne aux yeux de

tous la musique des esclaves Noirs », le développement et la modernisation des chants bhojpuris. Elle accorde une place importante aux chanteurs et chanteuses en bhojpurie. Deux sites en construction seront dédiés dans un proche avenir à Suriname et Trinidad et Tobago.

A noter aussi la présence de plusieurs supports visuels tels que des photographies qui aident le lecteur à mieux situer l'époque de l'engagisme, entre autres, une photographie des « **Coolies indiens à Mont Choisy** » ou une « **Cabanne indienne à Pamplemousses** » de F. Leroy datant de 1860.

Catherine Servan-Schreiber est chercheur au CNRS et rattachée au Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CELAS). Elle est spécialiste en littératures médiévales indiennes à l'INALCO et dirige l'équipe de recherche « Les industries culturelles indiennes. Scènes artistiques et littéraires », en collaboration avec Raphaël Rousseleau. Elle a publié plusieurs ouvrages sur la tradition orale indienne et la musique bhojpurie. « *Les Diasporas indiennes dans la ville* », (Hommes et Migrations 2007-2008), édité avec Vasoodeven Vuddamalai et *Histoire d'une musique métisse de l'île Maurice, Chutney indien et Segà Bollywood* en 2010. Elle a participé activement à la recherche sur la transmission musicale en contexte de diaspora, dans l'Océan indien et les Caraïbes, les musiques de fusion entre l'Inde et l'Afrique, et la place des orchestres de variété dans les sociétés contemporaines.

Indentured Labour Humanism in Berlin and Morocco

*Khal Toorabully, International Writer and Expert
on Coolitude*



A steam ship anchored at Trou Fanfaron in 1910. Source: AGTF Collection



Coolitude and post hybridity theories in Berlin

At the Berlin Symposium regarding post-hybridity, the Humanism of Diversity of Indentured

Labour, developed in the philosophy of Coolitude, was honoured in June 2013. In my keynote address, I indicated new research possibilities in post-hybridity paradigms. German theorists, indeed, felt the need to go beyond the categorization of post-colonial hybridity and explore innovative theories and visions. It is well established that after the seminal *Orientalism* written by Edward Said, who pioneered research in post-colonial studies, also favoured by Indian writers who wanted to forsake colonial stereotypes, hybrid theories flourished, to challenge eurocentric visions of the world.

There was a void in the wake of decolonization and emerging voices in Literature and identity visions. Post colonialism became the new horizon of university studies across the globe, with its promises and pitfalls as hybridity, dualistic in nature, can also mean a devalued entity in the relation with the other. This concept was therefore under close scrutiny during this symposium under the helm of Professor Ottmar Ette, a renowned German thinker. He was the one who invited the poetics of coolitude to Berlin 2 years ago.

The German thinkers and theorists found that the indentured period, and the way it was developed in coolitude, an interesting perspective to understand a globalised world and question hybridity as a means

of addressing complexity. It is now undebatable that coolitude offers a migrational problematics still under way, with modern migrants. It delineates how they negotiate their presence in a foreign land or in a space of cultural complexity.

In this vision of the world, the diversity of India is articulated with the human diversities of the world through the judicial status conferred on the coolie or indentured, by way of his/her contract, after the abolition of slavery. Instead of framing this historic episode as an essentialist trope, coolitude envisaged a humanistic approach which initiated the first discourse between the descents of slavery and the indentured, a perspective much favoured by UNESCO. More will come from this very fecund meeting in Germany.

UNESCO sites and “cultural security debates” in Morocco

In the last Assilah Forum in July 2013, Morocco, I was invited to speak about “cultural security”, more specifically, I was engaged in a debate regarding the role of UNESCO sites in preserving heritage and the memories of populations; and how to use them to guarantee this cultural security.

I reminded Mr Mohamed Benaissa, former External Minister of Foreign Affairs of Morocco and the organiser of the paramount forum of Assilah, one of the most important in the world, about the History of Mauritius, with its multifarious waves of migrations. He found this situation quite akin to the one prevailing in his own country, where there is much cultural and ethnic diversity.

At the round table, we had the exceptional contributions of Mr Mounir Bouchenaki, Special adviser to Mrs Irina Boukova, Director General of UNESCO, who spoke about remarkable experience about UNESCO sites in conflicts and their possibilities of reconciliation. For instance, Mr Bouchenaki, who was personally in charge of several missions for UNESCO, among which, the appraisal of the situation in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, highlighted the issue of heritage sites which can get entangled in political and ideological manipulations. He gave the example of the bridge of Mostar, which was gunned down, even if it was not a military target. The idea behind its destruction was that it was a link between the Christians and Muslims, and by bringing it down, it meant those two segments of the population were trapped in an ethnic conflict most of them did not want.

I spoke about the role of the Aapravasi (ex-Coolie) Ghat in the building of a national identity in Mauritius, especially from the angle of the humanism of diversity coolitude entails. I reminded that the spirit prevailing over the classification of the Ghat. Indeed, the Ghat bears a great symbolical significance, and as such, was thought as a catalyst to favour nation building in Mauritius. Coolitude allowed to prevent a competition of memories, as was underlined in his November 2011 speech by Dr. Navin Ramgoolam.

The Prime Minister stressed the fact that this Humanism of Diversity allows the Nation to develop a dialogue between the descents of indentured and slavery in Mauritius. He was well aware of this necessity, as my recommendations



Abdul Karim Siddhi, indentured worker from India. Source: MGIIIA.

were also taken into account in the Steering committees of the Justice and Truth Commission.

By reminding that Mauritius has two UNESCO sites, one dedicated to resistance to slavery and the other to indentured, I brought to mind that this situation was unique in the world, as clearly, UNESCO intended to appraise the dialogue in the Humanism of diversity propounded by coolitude in a view of broadening our negotiations of cultures, identities and enriching humanities at large.

The sites (Le Morne and the Aapravasi Ghat) in Mauritius are thus possible instruments to promote better understanding between human groups and contribute to a higher level of cultural security for Mauritius.

Audience Survey for Outreach Programme for the Year 2013

Urmila Ramkissoon, Heritage Guide/Public Outreach Officer

Getting our audience to tell us what is good about the Outreach Programme, and where we need to improve help us to ensure that the Programme is up to their expectations. An audience survey sheet has been designed to gather this information.

The Outreach calendar is planned in respect of zone, institution, association, district, and age group. The total number of audience from January till August 2013 is approximately 4100. The 4 zones were targeted which consisted of 26 schools (comprising of State, Private Aided, and Private Unaided) and 8 associations of different age group from different districts.

The Outreach Programme consists of:

- A Power Point Presentation
- A short film on Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Property
- Interaction with the audience
- Quiz
- Pedagogical activities for children such as Puzzle, 'atelier Ceramic', Quiz and Story Telling

The Outreach Programme is a key component of the future Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre.

Through dynamic activities, people get to know more about Apravasi Ghat World Heritage Property and get the opportunity to learn while participating in an activity.

Some feedback of our audiences:

"The information and pictures were really interesting and on track with the theme. During the session I was completely in the world of indentured laborers"

"Interesting and request to come often with such interesting story telling on different event"

"Programme was very helpful to students. Good interaction at the end which strengthened learning of the concept."

"Very good presentation. Fluent and easily understandable by children"

"Feeling of an emotional attachment, use of Creole language meets pupils understanding"

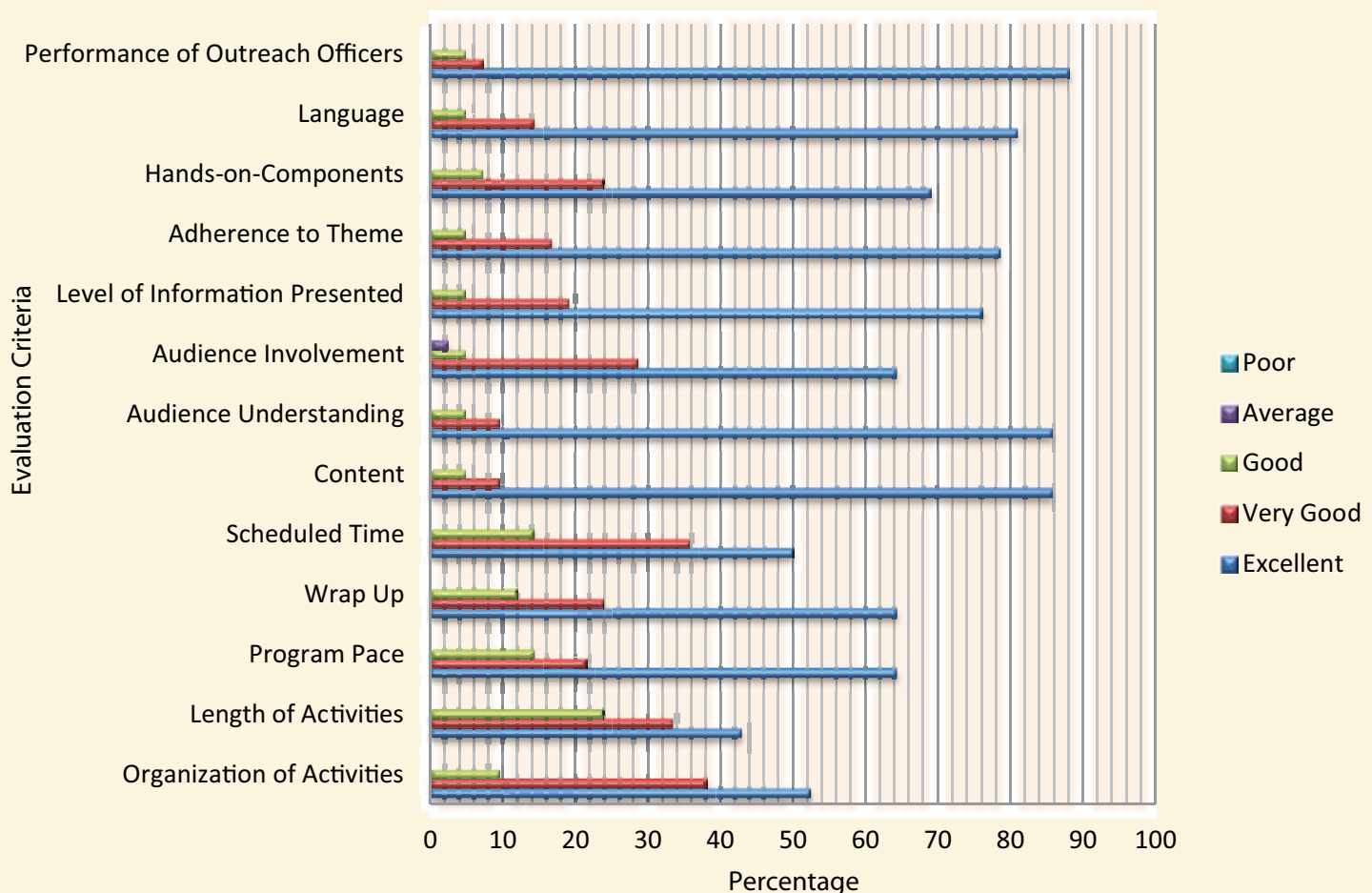
"Role play for pre-primary students for a better understanding"

"Evaluation Sheet for pupils should have been provided after the presentation"

"No change as the programme was complete in itself"

The Survey revealed the following:

Evaluation Of Outreach Programme January to August 2013



Educational activities at Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Property

Soonanda Nankoo, Heritage Guide/Public Outreach Officer

To mark the International Day for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the AGTF organized several pedagogical activities on the 20th and 21st April 2013. The following activities were proposed:

- Guided visit of Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Property
- Story Telling
- Educational activities on:
 - Traditional techniques of Construction
 - Making ceramics.
- Puzzle



Students participating in 'Ceramics'
Source: AGTF Photo Collection

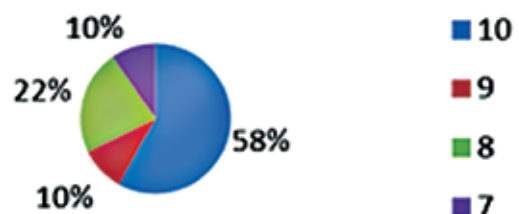
programme in the Interpretation Centre. To this end, a new activity was elaborated and evaluated before its inclusion in the programme.

The new activity is called "The development of ceramics" and aims at explaining how ceramics was initially developed in early civilizations and how it spread around the world in the 19th Century. This is in connection with the artefacts that will be presented in the Interpretation Centre and directly in line with the discoveries made during the excavations in 2011, 2012 and 2013 at BRIC.

The Heritage Guide/Public Outreach Officers's role is to explain to the young audience the evolution of pottery and relate it to the lives of our ancestors. In practice, children are invited to make their own ceramic with a lump of clay. They are shown the ancient technique used to make ceramics in the Neolithic period. They use this technical guidance to shape a pot. The evaluation of the activity showed that they were entirely involved in the activity. Parents also showed keen interest in participating.

During the activity, satisfaction survey was undertaken to support the evaluation of the activity. The analysis of the qualitative surveys revealed that the testing of 'Ceramics' was a success. Parents stated that the activity with 'Ceramics' was a learning experience through entertainment exploration, mental stimulation and excitement for their children. Through this educational activity, children learnt something new and also different from the usual academic knowledge. Hence, the evaluation showed that the activity was a means to enhance visitor experience. The survey revealed that the large majority of visitors were satisfied with the activity. Therefore with the upcoming Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre (BRIC), the AGTF hopes to implement this educational activity on 'Ceramics' and further contribute to the understanding and promotion of our history and heritage by the younger generation.

What do you think of this activity? (Rank 1 to 10 - 10+ best score)

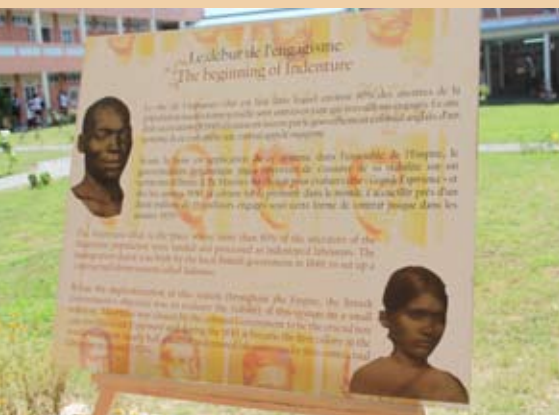


The AGTF is implementing a public programme guided by the strategy stated in the Management Plan. The objective is to foster understanding of the evolution of WHS and to attract new and regular visitors. There was also a need to develop further educational activities as part of the public



Participation of the AGTF at the Conference on Mauritian Culture held at St Esprit College, Black River

*Urmila Ramkissoon and Vedita Jha,
Heritage guides/Public Outreach Officers*



According to the Management Plan (2013-2018) of the AGTF, "the education and dissemination program is a key to further communication and promote the outstanding Universal Value of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Property". In this context, on the 7th of May 2013, the outreach officers of the AGTF participated in a conference held at the St Esprit College of Black River. The conference had for theme "The Mauritian Culture".

The conference was organised by the "A" level students of Travel and Tourism of the St Esprit College. They had a course work project which involves planning and managing a travel and tourism event which they subsequently transformed into a platform to discuss and present the Mauritian culture in general. In this line of thought, the conference saw the participation of different stakeholders, like the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund, the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture and the National Heritage Fund, which are responsible for the safeguarding and promoting of the cultural heritage of the cosmopolite country which is Mauritius.

During the conference, the outreach officers of the AGTF gave an introduction to the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Property and presented a virtual visit of the site. The objectives of this presentation were:

- To promote and create awareness about the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site and other sites related to indenture;
- To disseminate and educate people on the indentured system thus enabling the audience to have a better understanding and appreciation of our past;
- To create awareness about heritage and the need to preserve it;
- To promote heritage and encourage visitation and discoveries of same.



During the presentation, the outreach officers laid emphasis on the system of indenture and an attempt was made to relate it in a broader context to the Mauritian culture.





Legacy of Slavery and Indentured Labour

Past, Present and the Future

Dr Maurits S. Hassankhan, University of Suriname

From June 6th to 10th 2013, there was a conference for the commemoration of the abolition of slavery and the arrival of Indian and Chinese indentured immigrants in Suriname. The conference was organised by the Institute for Graduate Studies and Research (IGSR), Social Science Research Institute (IMWO) of the Anton de Kom University of Suriname, in collaboration with the National Archives Suriname (NAS), and the following cultural organizations: NAKS, Federasi fu Afrikan Srananman, Cultural Union Suriname (CUS), the National Foundation for Hindustani Immigration (NSHI), the Association for the Commemoration of Indonesian Immigration (VHJI) and the Committee 10th October.

We had two key note speakers for the conference. The first one was Stephen Small, who advocated to study the subject on the basis of a theory. The title of his paper was: "There's Nothing as Practical as a Good Theory: Free and Unfree labour Across the Atlantic". The second key note speech was from Vijaya Teelock from Mauritius. Her title was: "The Mauritius Truth and Justice Commission concerning Indentured Labour: the missed opportunity?". The purpose of this last speech was to see if other countries can learn something from the Mauritius experience.

Aim of the conference

The aim of the conference was to connect historical specificities of slavery, indentured labour and migration to contemporary issues of globalisation, Diaspora, identity formation, nationalism and transnationalism. A second aim of the organisers was to promote new perspectives and approaches in the study of forced and free migration and their impact on the society. By bringing scholars together from various parts of the world - senior scholars as well as new promising talents – they wanted to stimulate exchange of ideas, set up new networks and strengthen existing ones.



Opening Session with two cabinet Ministers and members of diplomatic corps.

The central theme was: Linking slavery, indentured labour and migration to contemporary issues.

Some questions to be answered during the conference were:

- What are the legacies of slavery and indentured labour in social, economic, cultural, political fields?
- How did post-slavery identity formation occur in different parts of the world in general?
- What has been the psychological impact of slavery and indentured labour?
- How are transnational identities developing in the world of today?
- How is the process of identification related to the imaginary relation with the country of origin and with other "partners in distress" in the Diaspora?
- In the case of the second migration or the twice Diaspora, what is perceived as country of origin, in other words: What kind of home land perspectives do people have and which impact will this have on their relation with the former homeland?
- In which ways did the various groups adapt to the new environment? What has been the policy or attitude of the receiving countries or societies?

- How are localizing processes ('creolization') expressed in migrant cultures?
- What kind of transnational ties exist among descendants of immigrants in the Caribbean?
- Are alternative transnational identities in the Caribbean real or an imagination?
- How are transnational ties and identities recognised and institutionalised by the State in the former homelands?
- What has been the policy of the countries of origin regarding their former citizens living in Diaspora?
- How and why are local processes of identity formation related to emotional and practical identification to the countries of origin, and how do these countries feature in these processes?
- Which are the social, economic, cultural and political consequences of migration and Diaspora in modern times?

Some themes suggested by the organisers were:

- The legacy of slavery and indentured labour: historical and current developments, with special reference to the psychological legacy of slavery and indentured labour: historical and current developments.
- Ethno - genesis and inter - ethnic relations
 - The role of ethnocentrism, ethnic labelling and stereotyping in the process of creating and maintaining ethnic boundaries
 - Ethnicity and politics
 - The role of religion and religious organizations in identity formation
 - Identity formation, boundary maintenance and interethnic marriage
- Transnational networks and identities
 - Relations with the country of origin?
 - Transnational families
 - Popular culture
- Language development in migration societies/migrant communities
 - Origin and development of Creolized languages.
 - Development of multilingual societies
 - Localization and globalization of religions.

- Social problems of people in Diaspora
- Health issues in historical and contemporary context.
- Diaspora policy: past, present and future
- Role of people in Diaspora for the development of their country of origin

According to the responses and comments of the participants, the conference was a great success. There were about 180 participants and about a hundred papers from all continents and regions: Australia, Indonesia, Mauritius, South Africa, India, Germany, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Trinidad, Bahamas, Belize, Canada, USA and Suriname.

In total 24 panels were organised from which four were on IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION; and two on ETHNICITY, NATIONALISM AND DEMOCRACY IN PLURAL SOCIETIES.

There were also two panels on religions: one on Afro-Surinamese and their religion and another one on ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN DIASPORA: THE EXPERIENCES OF A MINORITY GROUP IN PLURAL SOCIETIES

Other titles of panels were among others:

- Historiography and new perspectives on slavery and indentured labour
- Slavery, indentured labour and health issues chair
- Indentured labour and indian diaspora in smaller islands
- Afro-surinamese and their religion
- Maroons



Overview of a panel session.

- Migration and those who left behind
- Return migration
- Rhythms of resistance: work, pleasure and the body as a site of indentured memory
- Migration, religion and society chair migration and transnational bonds and relations
- Biographies and testimonies of indentured migrants
- Diaspora and development
- Surinamese hindustani in diaspora: health, strength and resilience
- Migration and cultural change
- Archives and the legacy of slavery and indentured labour
- Gender relations and the legacy of slavery and indentured labour

During the conference, we had also cultural activities, and a field trip to the Commewijne District with a visit to Fort new Amsterdam and the largest sugar estate Mariënborg. The conference had the support of the Ministry of Education and Community Development and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It is worth mentioning that minister Soewarto Moestadja from Internal Affairs presented a paper on identity of Indonesians and participated during three days in the conference.

One of the outcomes of the conference is the founding of the International Association for the Study of Indenture and Migration (IASIM). An executive committee of 21 members has been elected for the period of three years, with the following officials:

- President: Maurits S. Hassankhan (Suriname);
- Vice Chairs: Brij Lall (Fiji/Australia); Brinsley Samaroo (Trinidad and Tobago); Mahyendra Utchanah (Mauritius);
- Secretary: Vijayalakshmi Teelock (Mauritius);
- Treasurer: Kapil Kumar (India);
- Joint Secretary: Indra Rambaran (Netherlands).

We thank the AGTF for giving us institutional support for three years by hosting the secretariat and a website.

A selection of papers of the conference will be published in two or three volumes.

During the conference, there have been announcements for future conferences:

Belize is going to organise one in May 2014, while Mauritius will organise one in October 2014.



Cultural encounter musicians and singers from Suriname, Trinidad with Archana Kumar (BHU) in action

Comité Consultatif dans le cadre de l'inscription de l'Aapravasi Ghat sur la liste du patrimoine de l'UNESCO

L'Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund a organisé un Comité Consultatif dans le cadre du 7ème anniversaire de l'inscription de l'Aapravasi Ghat sur la liste du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO le 16 juillet 2013.

Le Comité consultatif est un forum de rencontre et un lieu d'échanges avec la communauté civile. Ce forum est organisé au minimum une fois par an et permet :

- de tenir la communauté informée de l'évolution des projets mis en œuvre par l'Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund ;
- Inviter la communauté à prendre part ou mettre en œuvre des projets pour la conservation et la promotion du site patrimoine mondial ;
- Consolider le lien entre le site patrimoine mondial et



Le Ministre des Arts et de la Culture et le Maire de Port-Louis nous ont fait honneur de leur présence. Source: AGTF Photo Collection.



Les travaux d'archéologie présentée par le Dr Diego Calaon, archéologue. Source: AGTF Photo Collection

la communauté pour assurer la bonne gestion, la conservation et la promotion du site du patrimoine mondial.

Cette année, l'objectif était de présenter les réalisations depuis le dernier Comité consultatif en mars 2012 et de tenir informée la communauté des projets à venir pour le site Patrimoine Mondial. A cette occasion, L'AGTF a présenté une :

- Rétrospective des projets menés depuis mars 2012 ;
- Présentation du plan de gestion (Management Plan) 2013-2018 ;
- Présentation du projet de Centre d'Interprétation Beekrumsing Ramlallah.

Risk Management Field Project, Mauritius, 9-27 September 2013



Staff of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund namely Lovehin Andiapen, WHS Manager, Vikram Mugon, Heritage Interpretation Manager and Mrs Maurina Soodin Runghen, Researcher, took part in the workshop organised at the Le Morne Cultural Landscape by the African World Heritage Fund, Centre for Heritage Development in Africa, (CHDA) in collaboration with UNESCO Office in Nairobi.

The Risk Management field project aims at training heritage professionals in risk assessment; conservation interventions; and community initiatives. The workshop enrolled 10 international experts from Namibia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Egypt, The Gambia, Kenya, Zambia, Seychelles, Swaziland, and Lesotho and 20 local Mauritians from various institutions.

The objective was to assess the risks and threats at Le Morne as well as the state of conservation of the property. The outcome of the Workshop was to produce a draft risk preparedness plan (RPP). The RPP is a key document at World Heritage Site and is an integral part of the Management Plan required by UNESCO for all sites inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The 178th Anniversary of the Arrival of Indentured Labourers in Mauritius

Activities in the context of 2nd November 2012

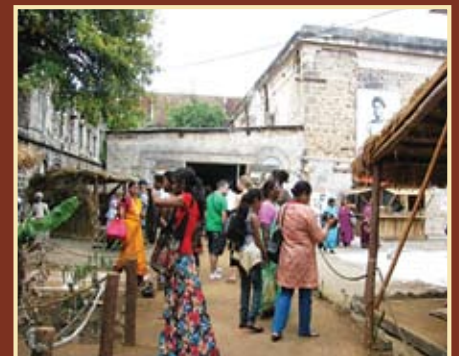
To commemorate the 178th anniversary of the arrival of indentured labourers in Mauritius, the Ministry of Arts and Culture in collaboration with the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund, organized a cultural programme. The commemoration started with a *yaj* and was followed by a protocol ceremony with a wreath laying at the steps of the Aapravasi Ghat as a *devoir de mémoire*. Afterwards, the public was invited to the exhibitions. These were opened to the public till December 2012 and comprised of:

1. A guided visit of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site. On this occasion human size statues depicting indentured workers and immigration officers were displayed on the site.

2. A replica of a village in the early 19th century was created to depict the life of indentured workers. The huts were built with traditional materials such as thatch and cow dung. Traditional games and songs were also performed.

3. Exhibitions

The public was invited to view 4 exhibitions on the indenture system; 1. The journey of Girmitya showed the recruitment process of indentured workers from India to Mauritius, 2. An exhibition on Aapravasi Ghat Immigration Depot and 3. An exhibition on *Le Lazaret de la grande Chaloupe, quarantaine et engagisme* from Reunion Island. 4. An art exhibition from the Mahatma Gandhi Institute was also proposed to the public.



Replica of a village in the early 19th century



Exhibition on Le Lazaret de la grande chaloupe from Réunion island.

Lecture and Presentation at AGTF

Dr Richard Allen, Historian from Framingham University, USA, took part in working sessions to review the exhibition text for BRIC in January 2013. During his stay, the public was invited to a presentation on his latest research forming part of his forthcoming publication on the slave trade in the Indian Ocean. His presentation provided an overview of British, Dutch, French, and Portuguese slave trading in the Indian Ocean between 1500-1850. In addition to outlining the general features of this activity, including the number of slaves traded by Europeans during this period, the presentation argued that the late 18th and early 19th centuries witnessed the development of an increasingly connected movement of slave, convict, and indentured labor within and ultimately beyond the confines of the Indian Ocean basin.



Dr Krish Seetah, Archaeologist from the University of Stanford, USA, gave a talk at the AGTF on the archaeological research conducted in Mauritius. The objective of his talk was to explain how archaeology could contribute to the understanding and documentation of the indenture period. Recent research in Bois Marchand or Trianon have shown the need to apprehend research on indenture on a global scale. He reminded that research on these sites need to be contextualised within a global perspective to reveal the significance of indentured sites in the local and international contexts.

The visit of his Excellency Pranab Mukherjee the President of the Republic of India on 12 March 2013



" The visit to this historic Heritage site of Aapravasi Ghat, where brave men and women from India and other shores first set foot in Mauritius when they arrived here more than 175 years ago, would remain etched in my memory. Aapravasi Ghat represents, in the most sublime way of the triumph of the human spirit in the face of all odds. It stands as a monument to the memory of these valiant men and women. Their immense courage, will and perseverance have shaped the Mauritius of today."

H.E Pranab Mukherjee
12.03.2013

Feeling expressed by some visitors at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site

Aapravasi Ghat symbolizes the Indian spirit, full of vigour and a sense of purpose. Even after 175 years, people from India have unblemished and untainted Indian Culture in its most natural and original form. This is a great achievement of being able to protect, preserve and pass in to future generations, rich culture and heritage, which we proudly possess. - Ajay Maken, Minister for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India. 19.04.2013



Wonderful place full of memories

Dr. Webber Ndoro, the Director of the Africa World Heritage Fund, based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Wonderful place full of sad memories

Mr. Kassim Omar, Interim Director of the Centre for Heritage Development in Africa.

UNESCO's Commitment to developing linkages

Ms. Mulekeni Ngulube, Officer in Charge of the Culture section, UNESCO - Nairobi Office.

(26 .09. 2013)

Thank you for the journey back into history

Chitra Joshi (4.02.2013)

Thank you for the wonderful guided tour at Aapravasi – it was very informative and interesting

Meenu Kohli

Thank you. It feels great to visit this historic place

Tejaswimi Joshi

(4.02.2013)



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